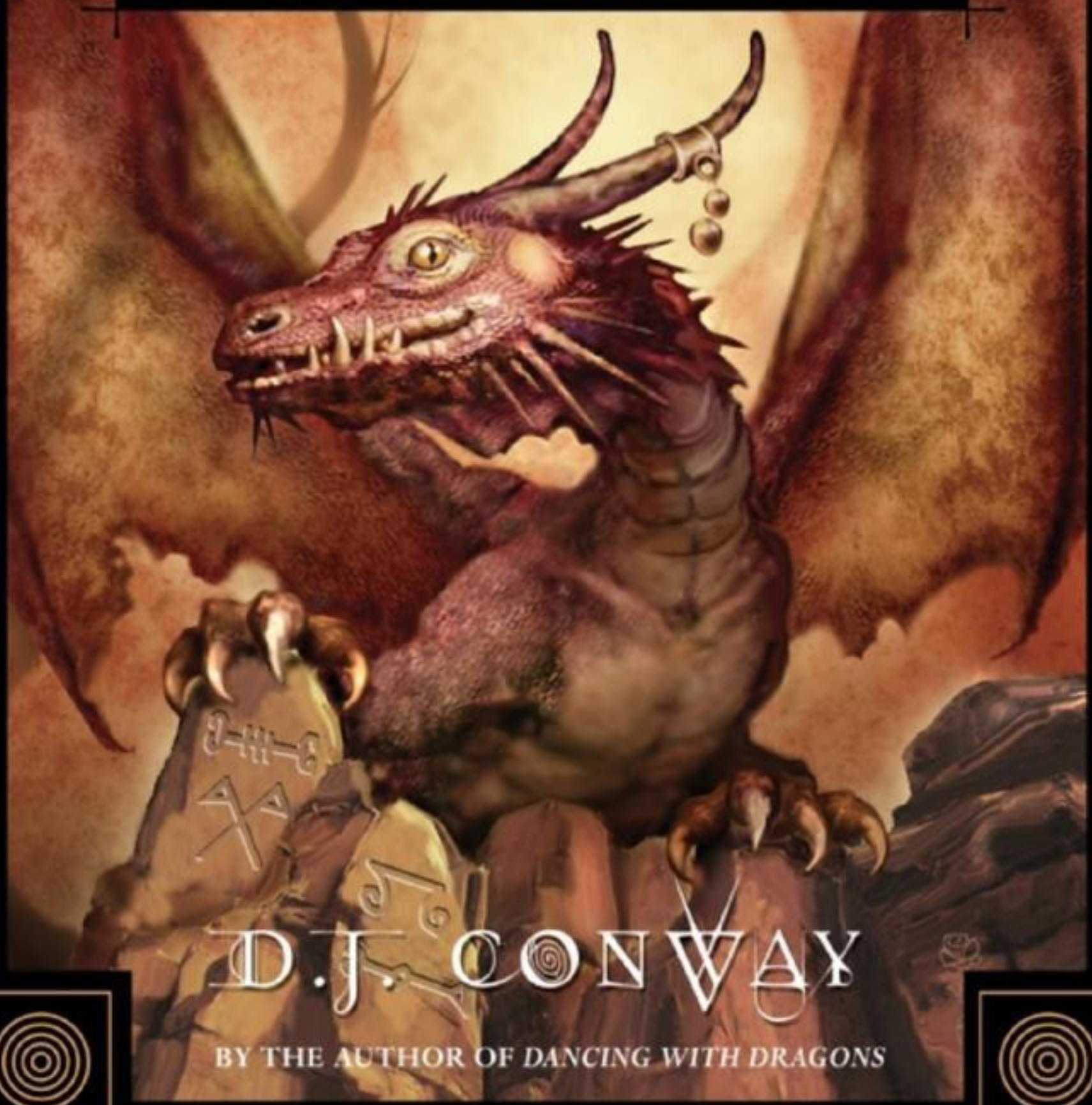
MYSTICAL DRAGON MAGICK

TEACHINGS OF THE FIVE INNER RINGS



D.J. CONWAY

BY THE AUTHOR OF *DANCING WITH DRAGONS*

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INTRODUCTION

Still Dancing with Dragons

HERE BE DRAGONS!

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After *Dancing with Dragons* was published in 1994, I discovered that a huge section of the population around the world was fascinated by dragons and believed in them as I do. One of the most interesting e-mails came from an older woman who asked me if I had been trained in the dragon magick of Lebanon. It seems that the rituals in *Dancing with Dragons* use nearly the exact wording of the rituals in that magickal path. It is nice to have the dragon information substantiated by the surviving rituals of an ancient group.

The Otherworld and all its beings, especially dragons, have always been part of my life. I was born with my psychic senses alert and with the ability to tap previously learned esoteric knowledge. Although my large extended family was full of closet psychics, few of them talked about their experiences. I soon learned that talking with my deceased grandmother brought trouble. Only the discretion of public silence was safe. Communicating with the deceased and dragons was best done when I was alone.

Dragons among the trees beyond the fields of dairy cows seemed normal to a child barely a year old. When I was old enough to wander those fields alone, I spent every possible moment with those dragons, as well as a host of nature spirits. When dragon teachers appeared, it was a pleasant surprise, not a shock. The shock came when I entered school and discovered there were no books on dragons in the library.

Many years later, when the dragons asked me to write *Dancing with Dragons*, I became their "interpreter" for the knowledge they wanted to share. However, the dragons refused to let me write all I knew about them at that time. "Not yet," was their response.

In that first dragon book, I wrote at length about whether dragons are real or imaginary. They are quite real. They simply have chosen to live in the Otherworld, a plane of existence with different vibrations. The Otherworld's vibrations allow these entities to exist in the same "place" as our physical plane without our seeing them. That is, unless the beings of that world want to be

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seen. Humans have the unfortunate habit of tearing things apart to prove they exist.

Many writers use the words *astral* and *Otherworld* interchangeably. I'm not sure I agree. The huge *Oxford English Dictionary* notes that *astral* comes from the Latin word *astralis* (meaning "star") and defines it as "consisting of a super-sensible substance beyond the tangible world in refinement." The *OED* also states that "the 'Otherworld' is a world beyond present reality." Sounds like the same place, doesn't it? Yet during sleep and deliberate astral travel, not everyone journeys into the Otherworld. In my experience, there is a thin layer of slightly more refined vibrations between the dense vibrations of the physical plane and the ones higher yet of the Otherworld. I base this idea on the shamanic tradition of thousands of years, a tradition in which one must be concentrating on the Otherworld in order to reach it. Therefore, it seems sensible that another layer of "stuff" lies between the two planes. Otherwise, one could idly—and unintentionally—walk between the worlds all the time, just by letting one's thoughts drift off reality. A frightening thought to most people. And probably to the beings in the Otherworld.

In *Dancing with Dragons*, I presented several areas of meditation and magick through which certain dragons could interact with human magicians. Or non-magicians, for that matter. I wanted people to be comfortable that dragons are basically friendly to curious humans and quite willing to work with—and create lasting relationships with—those of us who desire it. By explaining as clearly as I could the various methods of contacting dragons, many readers discovered the delight of "dancing" with dragons any time they wished to.

A good many of those readers were excited to learn that anyone could have the company of a guardian dragon, maybe even two, as I had with Nip and Tuck. Dragons rarely give you their real names, so I doubt Nip and Tuck are

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their true names. That pair is just too full of mischief to be serious, except about their duties.

Thinking the first dragon book would be the only one I was to write, I went on to other writing projects. I felt I had done a pretty good job of opening the door to other realities for people.

In 2005, the elder dragons informed me that it was time to write a second dragon book for serious students of dragon magick, this one containing secret information about the Five Inner Rings. They gave me a detailed outline and, over the next nine months or so, worked with me on expanding the outline with details not revealed before. Even I had been unaware of the depths of a few lessons.

About the time I started this book, Nip and Tuck graduated from being guardians, leaving me a little lost without them. I was widowed in 2002 and suffered dangerous health problems early in 2003. Three years later, however, my present husband and I were led to find each other under unusual circumstances. I'm sure Ken and I had more help than we realized when that meeting was arranged. At the same time, the beautiful white and gold Nesta took over guardian position. The mischievous Nip and Tuck still check in occasionally. Nesta is quick to tell them she has everything under control. Tinsel and Rudy, the two babies I mentioned in the first book, are still with me.

If you haven't made the acquaintance of a guardian dragon, perhaps you are wondering what they are. A guardian dragon is an adolescent who is learning to work with humans. Although they lack the size, strength, and knowledge of the older, larger dragons, guardians help humans, particularly magicians, by protecting, aiding in spells and rituals, and in the development of meditation and the psychic arts, especially divination. It seems to be customary to get acquainted with a guardian dragon before you meet the larger dragons. Perhaps this happens because the guardians are small enough not to frighten the humans to whom they appear.

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"Appearing" doesn't mean actually having a dragon manifest in front of you, although that can happen. Appearing is more like sensing a presence close to or behind you. Often you will see them with your inner eyes, as a fleeting movement in the corner of your eye, or in pictures in your mind. Their conversations are by telepathy. You will know the thoughts aren't yours, because the words, tones, and information aren't in your style of thinking.

These smaller dragons can range in size from knee-high to your own height. They become a type of astral watchdog for you, your family, and your property. That includes any pets you might have. The cats have always known Nip and Tuck, so they were leery for a time with Nesta. Now they accept her presence. They are probably happy that she doesn't tease them as the other two did.

You "feed" your guardian companions on love and respect and allow them to consume any leftover magickal energy drifting around. Guardians are always watched over by an older dragon, very likely because they can be very exuberant and active. So don't be shocked if you glimpse a shadowy large form unobtrusively standing around.

There are often much smaller, younger dragons with the guardian. These are usually siblings who need a dragon-sitter. The babies are about the length of your hand. Colors vary in all the younger dragons, revealing that the babies and guardians come from different dragon clans. The smaller dragons are lighter in color and their scales soft to the touch, again a clue to their young age. Older dragons have hard, defined scales and sharper, darker coloring.

Dragons age very slowly. Therefore, the juvenile and adolescent stages can last well over five hundred years. This is a relatively short period of time for long-lived dragons, who count centuries as we do months.

The dragon elders dictated the way in which I present the information in this book. So if you are eager to find out everything about them, be patient. What you learn in each Ring as a student will be some new, often slightly different, information, while you are building up to the next Ring.

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The Five Inner Rings themselves lie in the Otherworld, while much of what you learn will be practiced in this world. There is little written clearly about the Rings, just hints and a fine thread, primarily through Eastern myths and legends. The Dragon Warrior section has been kept alive in martial arts, but only as it applies to being a warrior. And little of the martial arts teachings are similar to the Dragon Warrior any longer.

The Rings might be compared to a college of Otherworld training. The area of the Five Inner Rings lies in the Otherworld realm, with connections to more than one level of that place. The only way I've seen the Rings is as concentric circles around an open center. There is only one Gate to each Ring, plus the one through which you enter from outside, and you can't go through any door to the next Ring unless the dragon at the Gate allows you to do so. This permission is given only after the appropriate initiation for that section. This is one field of learning in which you can't get "passed along," nor can you buy your way to a degree. You earn your way, or you don't go through.

Don't be concerned about how to reach the Rings. You can reach the Otherworld most easily through meditation. When you relax deeply while concentrating on your goal, you slide automatically into astral travel. Your concentration on the goal sees that you reach the correct place. Don't worry that what you see and experience in your mind might be illusion, because it isn't. All your inner senses, which duplicate the senses you use every day, will come alive in the Otherworld. All of it is truly happening, simply on another level of vibration.

If you prefer to "experience," and not have to remember the order of happenings in meditations given in this book, record them on an audiotape you can play while meditating. Then you can open yourself to everything you see, hear, and experience without worry. Meditation is simple, once you grasp the relaxing part. Remember, if you think too much about relaxing, it will only be harder. Practice and regular meditation soon solve the relaxing technique. You

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will become so engrossed with what happens in the Otherworld that you won't have time to worry.

To get comfortable with meditation, use the following short meditation to start on your way. It will introduce you to the Inner Ring of Apprentice, the first step along your dragon journey. And perhaps it will make you stretch into an entirely new way of looking at, and thinking about, the layers of "reality" in which we live. May your journey through the Five Inner Rings open your life to all the potentials around you.

Entering the Five Inner Rings

The beginning and the ending of a guided meditation are done in the same manner each time. Therefore, the beginning and the ending will not be included in other meditations in this book. If you prerecord the meditations, which makes meditation so much easier, simply speak the beginning and the ending in the proper places.

In preparation for meditation, silence your phone and doorbell. Make certain that pets do not have access to you during this time. Request also that any humans stay away and not talk to you. If necessary, hang a "do not disturb" sign on the door. Use soft, instrumental music as a background to blot out small irritating noises.

Using candles and incense are not required. If you do use them, make certain they are not near anything flammable and that they won't topple over. You also don't want your room to become choked with fumes.

I don't recommend meditating while lying down, since this is one of the easiest ways to fall sleep. Instead, select a comfortable chair in which you sit upright with your feet on the floor. When deep in your meditation, you will be in an astral travel or a shamanic trance journey.

You will not be aware of time, because time is a man-made theory. Nor are you likely to be fully aware of what is happening around you, unless the mind

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senses danger. In this case, you will be able to return to your body at once. The same applies if you are fearful of anything you see during this time. You are never trapped, caught, in danger of losing your soul, or whatever else people fear; you can open your eyes anytime and be back in normal time and place.

(Beginning of meditation)

Sit in the chair, back straight, feet flat on the floor, with your hands in your lap. Take three slow, deep breaths, relaxing more of your body's muscles each time. Visualize yourself surrounded by brilliant white light, with your guardian spirits at your side. Your body relaxes more and more until you feel light and very comfortable. See yourself standing beside a well. If anything or anyone in your life is upsetting you, drop it or them into the well. They fall down into the darkness away from you. Walk away from the well, leaving every annoying person and thing behind.

(End of beginning)

You feel yourself moving so fast, it seems as if you are not moving at all. A huge wooden door bound with iron scrollwork and hinges appears before you at the same time the velvety darkness around you fades to bright sunlight. As you stand looking at the massive door, you reach up to pull the heavy chain attached to a bell. The deep sound reverberates over and over until the door slowly opens.

"Why have you come here?" asks the brightly colored dragon just inside the door.

When you answer that you wish to study within the Five Inner Rings, the dragon beckons you inside. As the door closes behind you, you become aware that, although you sense the circular shape of the First Ring, what you see is a spacious, narrow room with slightly curved walls. Sunlight seems to stream through skylights, but you can't see the ceiling.

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As you look to the right, then the left, you see endless lines of tables holding a selection of objects, shelves against the walls full of scrolls and books, and diagrams and maps hung on the walls in between open cabinets containing jars of dried herbs and tall bottles of oils.

"Do you desire to study with the dragons?" the Gate dragon asks. "If you are certain, I ask you to sign the registry." The large clawed foot points to a table beside the closed door. On the table is a quill pen in an ink bottle and an open book.

If you truthfully intend to pursue the study of dragon magick, you step forward and sign your name beneath the other names you see in the book.

When you are finished, the Gate guardian fastens a tiny silver dragon figure to your clothing. You are then allowed to ask the guardian one question.

The guardian leads you down the room to a bright cone of light that reaches from the stone floor upward endlessly.

"When you come again, say you are a student of the Five Inner Rings," the dragon tells you. "We hope to see you soon."

The clawed hand points toward the brilliant cone.

(Ending) *As you walk into the light, you find yourself back inside your physical body. Move your fingers and feet slowly until you feel comfortable once more on the physical plane. The meditation is ended.*

(End of meditation)

European and Eastern Dragons

This world's ancient mythologies from nearly every culture tell tales about dragons. The descriptions of these creatures differ according to the culture studied. Basically, however, dragons can be divided into two large groups:

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Western and Eastern. The few strange descriptions of dragons that fall between these two categories are rare.

The dragons of the Western world, primarily Europe, are quite large with heavy, muscular bodies covered with thick, tough scales. They have a long sinuous neck with a triangular-shaped head, two leather-like wings, and a long narrow tail. The hind legs are large and powerful, while the forelegs are much shorter. However, the West also has *wyverns* (dragons with only two back legs), and a winged but legless version called the Worm. They are known to breathe fire and smoke when agitated. Their scale colors run the gamut of hues. However, no particular colors seem to be associated with special dragon families, the areas where the dragons are found, or their ages.

The blood (life force) of Western dragons is very corrosive and poisonous yet highly valued for its magickal qualities. Most Western dragons are not friendly or beneficial toward humans, probably because they were so widely harassed and hunted.

Eastern dragons act quite differently and are held in high regard by the peoples of the Far East. Most dragons of this class have four legs of equal size, a long serpentine body, and a varying number of claws. The five-clawed dragons, five claws on each foot, are so rare that Chinese emperors adopted them as a sacred ancestor, enacting laws that ensured that only top royalty could use their pictures. All other dragons have either three or four claws on each foot.

Although hot-tempered when provoked, they do not breathe fire often or go on destructive rampages. Portraits of Eastern dragons, embroidered on surviving clothing and wall hangings, picture them as primarily wingless. However, they can propel themselves through the air by balancing between the winds and the Earth's magnetic field. The Chinese divide the dragon population into four groups with different characteristics. Primarily, these classes rule over seas and rivers, the skies, precious metals and gems, and releasing the rain.

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Dragons are so popular in the Orient that experts have studied them for years. The experts discovered that colors were indicative of a dragon's age, that dragons laid eggs that took at least a thousand years to hatch, and that they could change forms through concentration or extreme anger. Eastern dragons had the very special ability to shapeshift into a human. This trait isn't mentioned in European tales.

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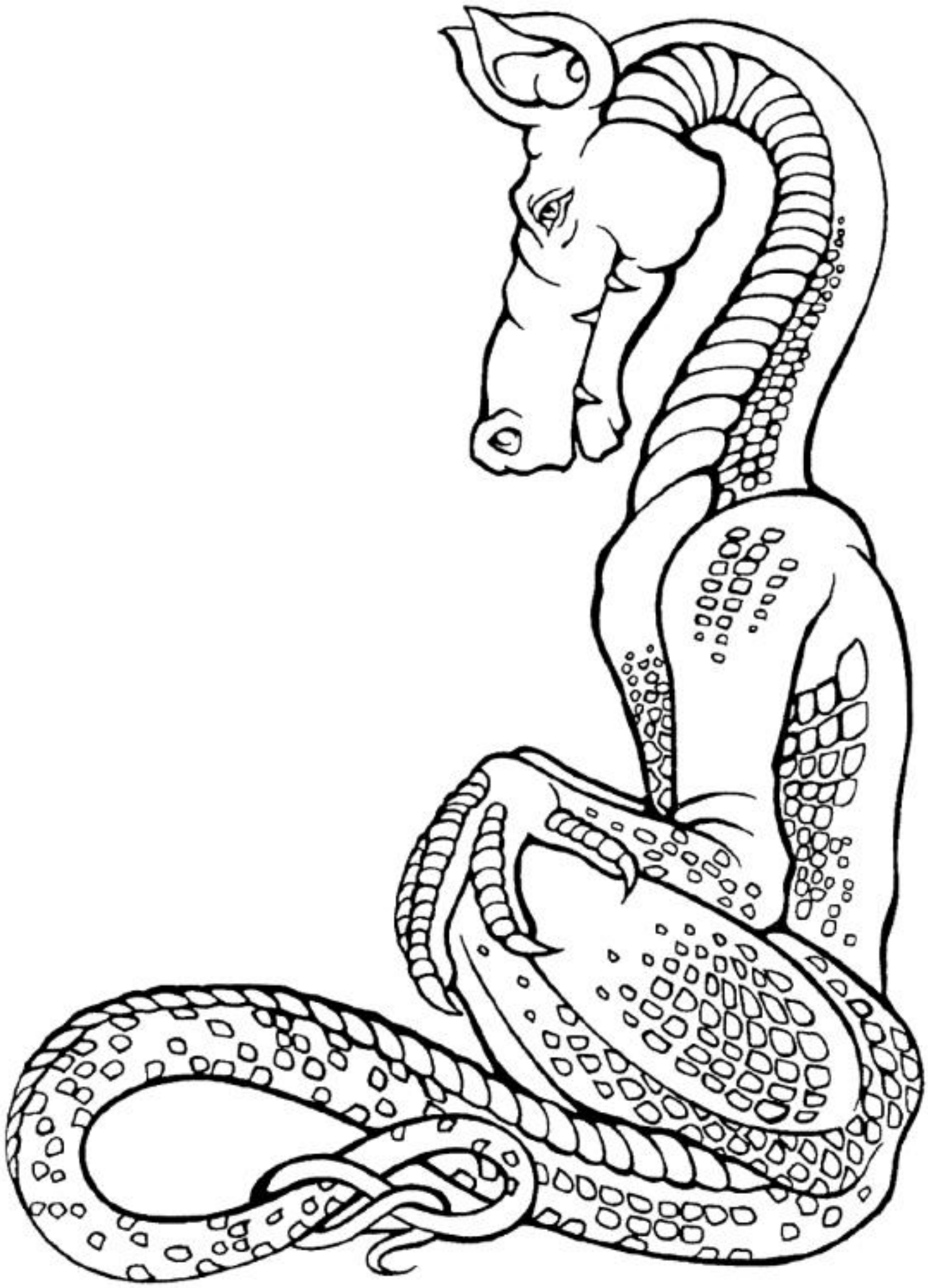

Chinese doctors were as interested in using dragon parts in medicine as European doctors were. However, the Chinese knew from their studies that dragons shed their skin and bones periodically. They also gathered dragon foam from the ocean after a fight or storm. The red, sometimes black, dragon

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blood was poisonous and unusable. However, it did turn into amber when it fell onto the ground.

Some characteristics are common to both the Western and Eastern species. Western dragons are less cooperative with humans than Eastern dragons, probably because they are treated with less respect. Neither is less powerful in magick than the other; they merely have different ways of doing things. They use guile and riddles until they are certain of a human's intentions toward them.

After they reach a certain level of maturity, the younger ones of the dragon species begin their work with humans by becoming personal or guardian dragons. Many of them decide to stay with one human for the human's lifetime, especially if the two forge a strong bond. If the atmosphere is safe, and the Apprentice trustworthy, often the very small dragons are allowed to do this. These young ones may be the length of your hand or smaller; they have not taken on permanent coloring yet. They are supposed to just observe, but frequently they end up befriending the Apprentice and any animals in the vicinity. Since dragons take much more time than humans to mature, it isn't likely you will see any change in size and/or appearance of the tiny dragons.

Soon after the arrival of the guardian dragon, usually in timing with a certain point in a human magician's training, larger and older dragons make an appearance to regularly teach and work with the Apprentice. These teachers do not accept excuses for slacking on practice. If you make too many excuses, or don't put in the learning time you should, these older dragons can and will discontinue teaching you. Your name also goes on a kind of dragon "blacklist." You only can remove yourself from this "list" by practicing diligently on your own and hoping for a reprieve.

Dragons have always held a high position in Eastern cultures. They still are honored each year at the Chinese New Year festivals. There are no Western festivals for honoring dragons. However, dragons have come into favor in the West in the last ten years or so. Even a few positive movies have been made

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about them. You can now see a small hole in the wall of prejudice. Perhaps you, as an example of a dragon magician quietly living life, will be one to help breach the wall. You never know.

Understanding Dragon Magick

Magick! The very word conjures up a variety of different mental images to humans. To the majority, their idea of magick is of instant gratification, of obtaining whatever they desire. A snap of the fingers, a wiggle of the nose, and *voilà*! What they wanted has appeared without any effort on their part.

However, practitioners of genuine, non-theatrical magick know that magick isn't instantaneous and that it requires much time and energy to prepare for and then perform. After that, one must be patient until the manifestation appears. The magician gathers the herbs, stones, candles, and other objects that signal to the linear, or left, brain that it has a schedule of ritualized duties to follow. This leaves the creative, or right, brain free to leap beyond the linear-imposed boundaries of "reality" and to mold universal energy into a desired result. The results rarely happen soon, especially if you are an unskilled magician, so take time to develop in the Otherworld realm before making your desire manifest in the physical world.

In order to do this, you have to trick part of your brain into cooperating. The right brain ignores all linear rules because this half of the brain sees "reality" and "possibility" in terms of the infinite, a concept the left brain cannot conceive of as real. There is no such thing as time to the right brain. To the left brain, everything runs on time. Whatever can't be seen by the human eyes, touched, tasted, or trapped in a laboratory vial cannot possibly be real, the left brain tells us. Yet it can't explain certain things that happen, no matter how hard it tries.

The art of magick in all its forms has been practiced and studied for thousands of years, a minimum of 4,500 years to be exact. If magick didn't

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work, if tangible results weren't seen, humans would have given up on it centuries ago. But we are still learning about magick and new (to us) methods of making it more efficient and productive.

Dragon is another word that creates a sense of anticipation in humans. Many cultures around the world not only practice magick, but they believe in dragons. Somehow, magick and dragons just seem to go together. The dragons themselves are magickal creatures, but the connection goes beyond that. Dragons are masters in using magick.

It is rare to find a culture that doesn't have tales of dragons in its history and folklore. These dragons may be described as having different forms from those in Europe and the Far East with which we are familiar, but they are still dragons.

Magicians worldwide know the value of befriending a dragon and getting it to add energy to the spells. In fact, a willing dragon as a co-magician in magick can triple the human magician's creative power before the spellwork even starts. If the magician cements the bond between with a co-magician dragon in a positive way—as equal partners, each able to contribute a different ingredient to the potion—spells begin to manifest faster. The human gains not only the physical result wanted, but learns new magickal methods and ways to communicate with beings of the Otherworld.

In *Dancing with Dragons*, I introduced several categories of dragons and ways to interact with them as co-magicians. I plan to expand the methods of magick in this book, along with introducing many more dragon secrets and ways of doing dragon magick. I assume you are familiar with the dragons and at least some of the information in *Dancing with Dragons*. If you are, these lessons will not give you much difficulty. Just a stretch in your magickal muscles. If you are not familiar with the first book, you will have to work a little harder, but learning will not be impossible.

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This book can be used entirely on a mundane level. Doing the spells and meditations can benefit any magician. Self-discipline, visualization, patience, and perseverance are valuable traits to cultivate so you can be the director, and not the victim, of your life events.

However, if a person is searching for a dragon guide to higher spiritual paths and more effective magick, and is willing to invest the necessary time and effort, then this book will unfold its information in a different way. According to the true desire in the seeker and the readiness of the pupil, the hidden Dragon Gates in the Otherworld will be revealed. The secret doors to the Five Inner Rings will give up their mysteries.

The door to each Inner Ring opens into a different, but higher, state of spiritual consciousness and a broader, deeper range of Otherworld magickal information. Each state of consciousness is related to a dragon level of teaching. That is why this book is divided into five stages of initiation, each stage matching one of the traditional Five Inner Rings of dragon magick.

The Five Inner Rings were originated by the dragons as a safe method of dispersing ancient knowledge to humans. The magick and other information written here is known by very few humans now alive. I was contacted by an ancient dragon group still practicing in Lebanon who wondered how I had come to know the dragon secrets. I was as surprised as they were that other people were working with dragons and had done so for several centuries. They assured me that my rites and magick matched theirs almost word for word—even the dragon names. All I could answer was, "The dragons told me." There was one more communiqué to encourage me to keep working, then no other answers. I suspect they dare not be exposed as magicians in a predominantly Muslim country.

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The dragons also control who can pass through a Ring Gate, and when. You may think you can fool the dragons by pretending to know what you don't, but that won't work. Dragons are wily creatures themselves. They can instantly see a lie or a "stretched" story. Then, without your being aware of it, the dragons will shift you into an illusory path that appears to you to be true. But you will have been sent into the mundane levels of magick. The only way to get back on track is to return to the place in the specific Ring where you stopped learning and started playing. This time, when you work your way up the path to the next Ring, you will be granted a true initiation for the Ring you are leaving, and you will be welcomed to the new Ring by the next level of dragon teachers.

To those who read for the joy of working magick with dragons, these Otherworld beings are willing to help you hone your magickal ability. They do not insist that you follow a spiritual path unless you wish to. Dragons are more aware of the right to free will than most humans are.

Since dragons like to work with intelligent, curious humans, they wanted this book to be written on two levels of understanding: the mundane and the spiritual. To those humans who discover and take the higher path, the dragons are ready to teach and escort you every step of your way. This "way" will culminate in important exterior and interior changes in all levels of your life. It also can help you peel away old façades and masks built during past lives. When these illusions are removed, your true spiritual self sends out brilliant waves of Light, revealing a new you—the person you were meant to be.

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Dragon magick is actually more complicated than it seems at first. It speaks to humans according to whatever level of growth they have mastered. What one human magician reads and understands may not reveal itself to another magician. Certain categories of dragons will not appear to, or work with, humans who have not advanced beyond a required level. They do not put powerful dragon magick into inexperienced hands. And dragons are not tricked into thinking you are more powerful, responsible, or deserving than you are. You may lie about your magickal abilities to those around you, but you can't lie to a dragon. To a dragon, all your true motives, abilities, and plans are laid bare.

Dragon magick of the Five Inner Rings is very different in vibrational rate than other magick. Dragons weave their spells out of unusual currents of invisible energies. These exotic energies are connected to the Multiverse and its infinite worlds. It is rare for a human magician to have this knowledge and know how to manipulate the power to find, touch, and weave these currents. The magicians throughout the ages who have accomplished this feat have always had dragons as co-magicians. They also have had the good sense not to travel in the myriad of Otherworlds without a dragon as guide and protector.

Dragons also mold these invisible currents of energies into "keys" that allow them to pass through strange and wondrous gateways. These gateways open to other universes and worlds, the existence of which humans have barely dreamed. This is the Multiverse. Humans know only a very small amount about the Multiverse and the mysterious gateways opening into its infinite levels. We are a very young species in these realms of existence, while dragons have exchanged information with the beings of the Multiverse for generations past numbering. When it comes to working magick and gathering information, no creature is more knowledgeable and dedicated than a dragon.

The doorway to becoming an Apprentice, the first of the Inner Rings, stands open, waiting for you to walk through it. It will take commitment and hard

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work on your part to move through the Five Inner Rings. You will have to repeat some things many times before you get them right. Other tasks will come more quickly.

One of the reasons that it will not be easy to make your way through the Five Inner Rings is that you must fit these studies in and around your responsibilities in everyday life. Becoming a dragon magician does not give you the privilege of shirking the lessons and responsibilities you agreed to learn in the present human incarnation. Every lesson is part of a greater lesson. Every life is part of a greater life.

I wish you the greatest of adventures as you journey through the Five Inner Rings of mystical dragon magick. May your path be full of joy and excitement, and may the goal at the end, the goal found in the Fifth Inner Ring of the Dragon Mystic, be the crowning touch of illumination on your magickal, spiritual path.

Dragon Ring Code

All throughout the Multiverse
The power is there to bless or curse.
'Tis balance of darkness and of light
That holds the Web threads ever tight.
Black chaos dragons and those of Light,
Locked in balance that is right.
The dragons' code is very clear.
Each Ring should be for half a year.
From Apprentice to the Warrior guard,
The way to be Mystic is long and hard.
All levels explored, all truth laid bare,
The students' motives, pure as Air,
Must pass the test within the heart,

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Before the Veil of Knowledge parts.
Dragon-trust he must earn, then wait
Until his teachers reveal the Gate.
Dragon magick, strong and old,
Requires the student to be bold.
Cast the numbers three times three,
For that is what the power will be.
No dragon spell is weak or small,
For dragon magick conquers all.

[contents]

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ONE

The Way of the Dragon Apprentice

FIRST OF THE INNER RINGS

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When I wrote *Dancing with Dragons*, I knew I had too much dragon information to fit into one book. Besides, I was not certain how interested my readers were in the subject at that time. It turned out that the subject of dragons drew more interest than I had thought. The volume of e-mail asking for more on dragon magick kept growing. This book is my attempt to fill those requests.

I expected to begin this book as I did *Dancing with Dragons*—with discussions of the dragon species and their magickal abilities, front and center immediately. I thought that the dragons would want to begin instruction on the very first page. In fact, I didn't expect this book to be laid out as it is at all. But how can one argue with a dragon? The book is theirs; I'm just the typist.

When I finally managed to speak to Sairys[1], I asked if she would explain the reasoning behind this strange layout and the short delay in starting the lessons. Sairys informed me that the dragons wanted the beginning student to have certain knowledge before meeting the dragons—that these lessons required a different state of mind than the other book did. The students needed a slightly modified introduction to prepare their subconscious and collective unconscious minds for an entirely new, and very serious, look at themselves, the universe, and dragon magick. Only a true, dedicated student to dragon magick would walk the complete path from Apprentice to Mystic.

Then, in typical dragon fashion, Sairys presented me with a surprise. Since most of the knowledge I would be recording was new, even to me, I was to undergo the lessons of the Five Inner Rings as I wrote the book. Dragons have a sense of humor that is often very difficult to understand.

The Dragon Apprentice will be studying quite a few different subjects in this section. Besides becoming acquainted with the tools needed by the Apprentice, you will be introduced to magickal laws, the layout of the Otherworld and its Gates, co-magician dragons, and dragon alchemy, among other interesting

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subjects. In other words, you will have a lot to think about and consider before you prepare to enter the next section, that of the Dragon Enchanter.

Take your time with each chapter. Let your mind absorb each presentation thoroughly before moving on. Practice meditations often so you can gain the most benefit from them. Good luck.

Principles and Laws of Magick

You stand at the threshold of the First of the Inner Rings. Now is the time for you to decide if you want to take the mundane path, learning simply the everyday types of magick, or if you are willing to accept the role of Dragon Apprentice and all the work it entails.

There is nothing wrong with studying the more materialistic type of magick. You can still apply it to all life around you to help yourself and others. This world is heavily populated with humans (sometimes called "mundanes") who have no belief in the psychic, magick, and the Otherworld. The word *mundane* means the everyday world, the material level. I don't use the word myself because, to me, it has a hint of prejudice about it. Nonbelievers in magick use their free will to make their choice not to believe, just as magicians use free will to make their choice. As universal beings, nonbelievers are worthy of help through herbal medicines and quiet spells and rituals to bind criminals, to make the nonbelievers' environment as safe as possible, and so on.

Because some people believe in magick, it doesn't make them better than other people. All magicians must work and live with the mundane world and karma. We are subject to the same universal laws everyone else is. Hopefully, we are wise enough to see the lesson in a life event sooner. By acknowledging the lesson and adjusting our lives and thought patterns to accept what it is and what it does to us, we don't have to pay the "penalty" all the way to the end.[2] A very wise magician will be studying and growing spiritually at the same time.

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Mystical dragon magick is a spiritual, but nonreligious, path. The only oaths you will be asked to take are those that require you to acknowledge the existence of dragons and their magickal powers and to speak quietly, if at all, about the Multiverse and your study of it. This knowledge is not for those who chose not to walk the path of the Five Inner Rings. This request is very important to the work, and it is best for all if the deepest magick, your experiences, and your results of working certain methods do not become topics of public discussion.

Before I explain in more detail about the Otherworld and the Multiverse, we need to take a closer look at what magick actually is. It isn't an illusion conceived by superstition or an unbalanced mind, nor is it a David Copperfield stage act.

Most beginning magicians are familiar with the definition of magick: by using universal energy drawn from outside and willfully channeled through you, and by molding that energy through your intent, visualization, and concentration into an event or desire, you can cause that event or desire to appear in your physical world. You don't say a spell and your desire falls into your lap. Nothing in life, not even magick, comes that easily.

Magicians and most Pagans in general do not recruit members. They believe that when a student is ready, that person will find the path to follow. When the deliberate choice is made to follow that path, all the teachers, books, and similarly minded friends the person needs will be there to help.

Whether someone believes in magick or not, it is very real. But it helps to believe in magick before you see or experience it. Then you will be less likely to dismiss a magickal spell's culmination as illusion or a freak one-time incident. Even if you think you know a lot about magick and how to do it, it is important that you keep an open mind to the possibility of learning something new.

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Magick itself is both an art and a science. It is a science in that magicians are discovering things that do not violate scientific laws as we now know them but often appear to. Chemistry came about through the work of the Arabian and European alchemists. Many ancient herbal medicines led scientists to develop man-made medications that now control, or prevent, certain diseases among humans and animals.

Magick is also an art because it uses inner talents and mental "muscles" that scientists can't yet measure. Magick isn't pulling a rabbit out of thin air or tripping over lost treasure chests. It is mentally pushing against certain points in the flow of universal energies, carefully gathering separate strands from the Otherworld realm, and molding this ball of energy into the desire you wish to fulfill. By making small changes, the magician's opportunities to have that desire manifest become astronomical. Magick acts like a giant magnet, attracting what you want.

Trained magicians can learn to have greater control over their lives by using these techniques. By changing their lives, magicians also affect changes in their destinies. This comes about through interacting with the Multiverse on all its planes and according to universal magickal rules. Influencing parts of your future by having a hand in creating it is better than blindly accepting whatever happens.

Ancient magicians learned early in their training how to live in a Multiverse of many worlds besides this physical, material one. Magicians have exchanged magickal information with friendly Otherworld beings for thousands of years because this exchange benefited all. There is no way to know how long dragons and other fantastical creatures worked with human magicians before these beings fled the unreliability of humans and decided to permanently live in the Otherworld.

After their choice to move, these beings only made rare trips to this world. Therefore, magicians were forced to learn how to travel between the worlds

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and hope to find a reliable guide. This is as true of shamans and mystics today as it was centuries ago. Because of their ability to do so, shamans and mystics are still called Walkers Between Worlds, an apt description of what they can do.

A magician is responsible for whatever she or he does. The Multiverse (Goddess and God) put certain consistent rules about magick into place, just as it created scientific laws for every planet of the universe. You can avoid problems if you observe these rules.

Know yourself. This is the same motto once carved over the doorway to Apollo's temple at Delphi. In other words, don't allow illusions about yourself to cloud the reality of who and what you really are. If you don't like parts of your personality, don't blame others. Change what you don't like. You have free will. Obviously, you made some wrong choices, either in this life or another, and need to correct them. But never lie to yourself about these things. Lies come back at the most inconvenient times to haunt you through karma.

Never claim you are a master in anything. Someone will always come along to prove you wrong. Magicians who make it a point to brag to others that they are masters are best avoided. You will frequently find their teaching background questionable, their attitudes arrogant, and their information wrong.

Always be careful what you do and say, particularly when discussing magick with nonmagickal people. Talking about spells you do weakens them. By talking about a spell within the first twenty-four hours, you withdraw energy from your intent and concentration, allowing power to seep away. If another magician, for example one who doesn't want your spell to materialize, hears of your work, she or he can do a counterspell to make your spell null and void. Talking about a spell can sidetrack your determination. Intent and determination always control magickal results.

Take great care what you wish for. You might get it. This rule comes into play when magicians haven't made certain they are using the right spell

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ingredients or don't have the correct intent behind their wishes. Have you thought about your motive for doing a certain spell? Have you truthfully looked at all the positives and negatives that will come your way if your wish is granted? Is your spell so detailed that you leave no room in case something better comes along? Or have you been so lax with details that your visualization and intent wander off, turning the spell energy in another direction?

Never do magick to control another person. Using a person's name in a spell is *not* a good thing to do. The named person will subconsciously revolt against the control, eventually breaking free with obvious negative feelings toward you. If the person blithely goes along with your control, you may have just as negative an ending: a person who is a hypochondriac or won't get a job or help at home; an abusive, sneaking spouse; a person with a hidden criminal or mentally unstable mind. The list can be endless since even magicians rarely see the true characteristics behind the masks we all wear. Be careful what you use magick to get.

You are responsible for everything you create or cause to happen by magick. First, never do magick, even healing, for other people unless they ask you to do so. It is better never to do magick for another unless it *is* healing. You do not know fully the intents of the person asking you. Some people are too lazy to learn magick for themselves but are quite adept at using any such energy raised for them. Or these people are able to manipulate the energy into a negative path. If the spell turns out to be harmful in some way, or if it boomerangs, you are tied to the karma it creates along with the other person. This boomerang effect also can apply to your own spells on some occasions. You need to ground the remaining spell energy when you finish and set boundaries for how long the spell can last and how far the spell energy will go. This will be thoroughly discussed in the Enchanter Ring section.

Don't invoke anything you do not know how to banish. Some magicians get caught up in the rush of power they feel when doing magickal spells. Sooner or

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later, some of these magicians will feel they have enough knowledge and power to demand the presence of an Otherworldly being they've read about in some book. You may end up with a very negative, invisible companion who causes you no end of grief until you can find a more knowledgeable magician to banish the thing back where it belongs. If this creature is a very malevolent being, it can cause poltergeist activities and even attack you. Don't play at magick.

When you place yourself, by oath or otherwise, in a position to be called a student of dragon magick, you agree to become destined to fulfill a very meaningful purpose in your life. Your behavior, compassion, and use of magick will touch and influence all who are near you or cross your path, even if they never learn you are a magician. A meaningful purpose in life usually does not mean something spectacular either. It's all the little magick by obscure magicians that change and affect the Multiverse. All the work of the ordinary people in this world has far more impact on crucial events than one big-name personality.

Because of your oath to the Five Inner Rings, you may be called many times to silently use your magickal powers for a critical cause. Usually this call flashes into your heart and mind with such impact that you know the idea doesn't come from you. But be cautious. Never accept any advice that goes against your ethics or whose positive outcome is questionable. Primarily, these silent calls will be to minimize disasters, change the course of a possible war or invasion, to prevent massive riots and killings, or to build a wave of compassion, healing, and comfort for a large group of victims. However, being destined isn't something you brag about to others. You accept it with humility and a deep sense of duty to Earth, our universe, and the Otherworld. It isn't everyone who is chosen to be a dragon magician.

Magickal destiny and the appearance of "miracles" require our constant participation by free will. We can walk away at any time and avoid the heavy responsibilities. When we begin our magickal studies and learn how much

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dedication and hard work they will require, we can turn a deaf ear as we leave those studies behind. Avoidance also may come when we allow society and organizations to stigmatize us as weird or evil, thus discouraging us from learning. However, every moment of every day can be a decisive time for us, as it gives us another chance to help good magick happen.

No member of the Five Inner Rings is ever called a priest, priestess, guru, master, or any other nonsense name. There is no hierarchy. On occasion, a person is called by the title she or he has earned by journeying their way through the Rings. Even among those magicians, there will be no insinuations that one is better than another. Or you may call yourself a Daughter of the Dragon or a Son of the Dragon after you go through the initiation ceremony in this section.

No dragon magician represents any church or religion either. All magicians are on a private, personal, spiritual, but nonreligious path. Seeking spiritually is seeking to improve the soul. Religion today has come to mean belonging to an organization. All magicians of the Multiverse try hard to become an adept in magick, secret lore, mysticism, and ancient knowledge—not just for the sake of learning but to help others. This includes recovering forgotten Otherworld information. By this alchemy of sciences, the magician is subtly transformed spiritually.

Most magicians prefer to work alone, or perhaps two or three together. The group method would only become necessary if they all needed to work intently on the same spell, such as preventing an invasion of their country, averting another war, or eliminating the terrible consequences of some government deciding to use nuclear weapons. This method was effectively used during World War II by Witches and magicians in Great Britain.

However, magicians do take part in other Pagan activities, such as Renaissance fairs, seasonal celebrations, and gatherings for religious freedom.

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Dragon magicians are social beings, as all humans are—but not while they are seriously practicing magick.

Although magicians don't use pretentious titles to identify themselves, there is one important way to know where they stand on their magickal path. Any magician can be, and very frequently is, classified according to her or his magickal methods and intent. In wide, general terms, there are three kinds of magicians: white, black, and gray.

"White" magicians are usually very reluctant to work with their magickal powers. Many of them do not use magickal spells at all. Instead, they use poetry, song, dance, and positive thoughts, believing these to be in the best interest of all. They consider magickal spells to be a way to inadvertently harm someone. However, they do strong healing work and may use a minor type of thinking-spell for this. They truly believe that concentrating on and using positive words and phrases will make everything balanced. Although these are good words with positive action behind them, they do not prepare these magicians to deal with anything unpleasant. If "white" magicians find themselves in a testy situation that calls for a strong intent to repel or bind, they may get hurt. Not only do they not have the necessary training to protect themselves, they cannot believe that the "enemy" doesn't respond to their pacifist beliefs.

If this is your belief, it is basically a good one. Being kind, positive, and loving are good traits for all humans; it really is too bad that the Multiverse doesn't run on those ideas. For your own safety, however, please try not to get involved with dangerous magickal situations. You fulfill the role of healer quite well. There are never enough healers to go around.

The second category of magicians is called "black." These magicians primarily want power over others. They also don't want to be governed or judged by any laws, either human or universal. They are basically self-centered

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with little, if any, conscience when it comes to getting their way. Unfortunately, this is the world's typical stereotype of a magician, a Pagan, or a Witch.

The third category is that of "gray" magicians. These practitioners stand at the midpoint of magickal power, ready to do whatever needs to be done to protect all—usually without recognition or praise, which is the way gray magicians prefer it.

This path has been my choice since I was young. I later taught students, "If you find evil in your community, face it, trace it, and erase it. If you have any evidence of law-breaking, tell the police. Don't play fair. Just begin binding and tripping spells. Binding to keep the evil from hiding, and tripping so the evil ones are caught by their own errors. Karma is unlikely to accrue in this type of action, but if it does, it will certainly be less than if you knew about the evil and did nothing." Strangely enough, this attitude, which seems balanced to me, has brought me under fire several times from certain segments of the Pagan community.

When faced with stopping evil in any form, you can brainstorm for ways to work a spell in a positive mode. Tripping spells are very good for this, as they use the energy of the culprit to self-entangle and get caught by the police in circumstances that do not involve you at all. If negative spells are sent to you, you can return them to the sender without accruing bad karma. After all, the energy doesn't belong to you, and it is up to you to keep it or return it.

There is a universal rule in magick known as the Rule of Three. Simply put, whatever type of power you deliberately send out by strong intent or magick will return to you in three times the quantity, power, or energy. If your spells are positive, you will receive positivity in return. If the spells are negative and harmful, you may well get back three times three of the same energy. This fits perfectly with the law that like attracts like. It pays to think twice about the types of spells you send out into the universe and why you are doing them.

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The dragons, too, have a code of ethics that covers both mundane and magickal, spiritual levels. As with all dragon teachings, each line of the code carries more than one level of meaning. Dragons will not point out the different meanings. You have to discover those on your own.

Dragon Ethics

1. Little seen gets more done.
2. Look for truth in the Heart of hearts.
3. A lie burns both the liar and the silent listener.
4. Be true to the responsibility of the balance.
5. Silence and magick: both are needed.
6. Honor your elders, for they carry important ancient knowledge.
7. Evil gives no forewarning and no pause for relief.
8. Dignity speaks well of a messenger.
9. You color your own light.
10. What happens to one stone reflects on all.

Please remember that the following short explanations of these ten ethical principles are relevant to this world level only. There is a deeper, more universal and spiritual meaning for each.

You can accomplish more in your studies and work if you don't waste time trying to impress your peers with your robe and wand. Let your life and actions speak for themselves. Those who want dragon magick without the work will not be impressed whatever you do. Those who are truly attracted to this path won't need to be impressed. They will learn for themselves that the personal dragon center within you is called the Hidden Dragon Heart. It is a very powerful space. You can always find the truth there by calling upon your dragon teachers for aid and by using common sense to know how the energy of any situation or person feels to you. So don't be concerned with what other people think.

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No lie ever escapes reward; when the truth finally is revealed, the listener who said nothing to expose the liar will share the liar's social punishment.

Everyone, magician or not, consciously or subconsciously, is responsible for keeping the balance of the Multiverse. If the beings on any world completely destroy the balance in their universe, chaos and destruction on all levels would occur like a line of dominoes, unless the Watchers and dragon magicians work quickly to repair the damage. Even if we knew the statistical accounting of the loss, we could not grasp such figures.

Not speaking about your magickal work keeps the spell strong, while talking about it draws away energy. The best magicians work quietly, without anyone knowing.

Elders of any culture on any world are valuable for their firsthand knowledge of many things; true history and ancient natural healing would be lost without our elders.

Never expect any negative-minded person or negative event to announce itself before it enters your life. Once at work, don't expect negativity to follow any code of ethics except its own. And those ethics will never be positive, or even the same, twice in a row.

Messengers never seem to carry a high percentage of pleasant or welcome news. Maintaining poise and dignity in the face of hostility reveals one's level of self-control. To walk away from such negativity with grace, the messenger learns how to use the ability to detach emotions. She or he also learns by intuition which people can handle the plain unvarnished truth, and which ones must be given a softer version.

Those people who can see or feel aura colors can easily recognize the type of person you are, the real you. All the exposed and hidden emotions and intentions leak into the aura around each person. Each color has a specific meaning. For magicians who are observant and listen to their intuition, it takes

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only seconds to determine what path a fellow magician follows: white, black, or gray.

Everything in the Multiverse is connected to the Web of Life. Everything in the Multiverse, animate or inanimate, is alive and connected. Therefore, everything and anything that happens on a world of any level usually causes a ripple effect of some kind on all the other worlds. An incident may occur on one other world, but the energy, positive or negative, will return to you in some way. Most of the time, we never know the complete results of something we do. Fortunately, this works with positive events as well as negative ones.

The Wiccan Rede is very similar to the dragons' ethical code, but much shorter: "If you harm none, do what you will." Don't deliberately harm anyone, including yourself. The succinct, but more detailed, code of the dragons can be applied to magicians of all paths.

Using magick requires commonsense thinking. If you use negative magick to get what or who you want, you will gain bad karma. If another magician or magickal group gets involved, you will likely start an avoidable magickal war. Before you decide on a spell to use, look at a problem from all angles, seeking positive methods of removing the irritant.

However, if there are extremely evil people, beings, or energy pools loose on any world-level (and such creatures do exist), it becomes the duty of all magicians to remove or bind them for the good of all worlds. Evil can, and does, move from world to world, level to level, throughout the Multiverse, picking up power as it goes. This does not mean magicians kill anyone. We use binding and tripping spells to get the negativity stopped and properly removed.

Yet, in the greater pattern of the Multiverse, we would not recognize Light without knowing Darkness. Light comes out of the Darkness—the blackness of the Void that is the source of all creative energy. So there is an actual purpose for every creature or occurrence. There is an eternal struggle to balance between Light and Dark. It is incorrect to say that either is wrong or evil, for

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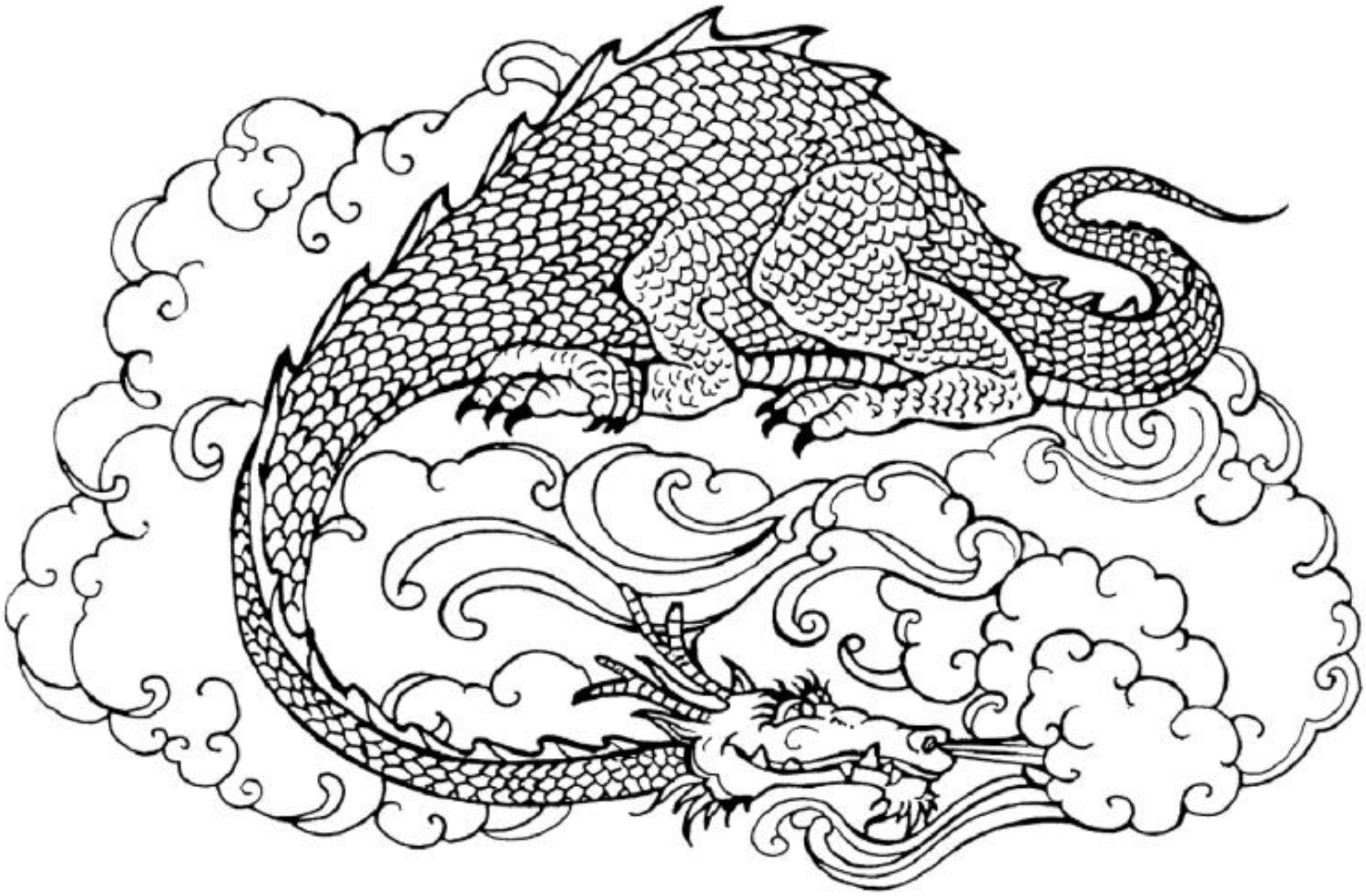
they both fulfill a definite purpose in the Multiverse. This was recently brought to public attention by a series of articles released by scientists who have been studying dark matter for years. I will discuss that subject in the Enchanter Ring section.



Dark dragons are an example of the misconception of the Dark color and energy. These dragons are not evil. When their energies, efforts, and work are correctly coordinated with dragons of Light, they help provide the needed balance in the Multiverse. There are other examples of such creatures similar to Dark dragons, each type unique to a world and/or a level of the infinite Multiverse. They appear to be built-in guardians as well as necessary visual reminders of the need for negative energy.

Any creation birthed by the Multiverse must be half negative energy as well as half positive. Creation happens in no other way. Unless Light is

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appropriately mixed with Dark, there will be no middle ground, no understanding of either Dark or Light. Lacking proper balance, this universe, the entire Multiverse, and every world within it would spin out of control and destroy itself.

In every world and on every level, there also are beings, creatures, clouds, and currents that are live malevolent energies with negative, unfathomable agendas—creatures or energies only controlled by alert guardians of the Savage Heart clan. We have all come into contact with humans who revel in cruelty and who appear to have no remorse or conscience. Fortunately, this type of human comprises only a small percentage of the total.

Chaos dragons are totally different from Dark dragons. Chaos dragons work only with the dark matter of the Creative Void. It is their duty to keep the pot stirred, so to speak. When a correct request is set into motion, by a magician or merely someone very intent on a goal, the Chaos dragons release the corresponding amount and type of energy needed to manifest that request. They also see that the manifesting energy bounces through the Multiverse to the proper destination without upsetting or changing other work along the way. Dark matter, which has just recently been verified by scientists, will be discussed more completely in the Enchanter Ring section.

Here again, we find balance through Multiversal laws and those who enforce them. Everything in this world and universe is mirrored in every other world and universe throughout the entire Multiverse. What we have on our planet has an equivalent of some kind on every other planet on every level of the Multiverse. What happens here, physically or magickally, affects one or more events or beings on other levels of the Multiverse. It may not occur immediately, but the event's energy will rebound, perhaps in lesser strength if the sender or receiver is knowledgeable enough to craft a spell or control visualization of a desire with caution. That is why magicians should take great care in how they word spells and how they concentrate their intent.

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The positive and negative energies of each universe may appear in different shapes, events, and act in different manners, but they still are identifiable as positive and negative. Since this is so, every area in the Multiverse is struggling to keep a balance of Light (positive) and Dark (negative). A loss or a bad misstep in one level of the Multiverse affects every other level.

Only a serious, dedicated student of dragon magick should walk the path from Apprentice to Mystic. It is a journey full of responsibility and selfless work. The dragons and other such exotic, wise creatures work hard to keep this sacred path clear and protected. These beings also are the only ones to teach their magick to humans and to the humanoids/beings who live on other worlds. Their students who stay the course are few, but just enough to help align all parts of the Multiverse. It is an unusual privilege for dragons to offer their great wisdom to us, considering that so many humans are classified as "unreliable."

If you feel the call to become a Dragon Apprentice, you are indeed fortunate. You have a rare opportunity to learn deeper magick from the masters of magick—the dragons. And you will gain a critical ability, for what you learn and practice in this world is easily carried with you into the Otherworld. Once you learn dragon magick, you are never without power.

Acceptance in Dragon Studies Meditation

Every magician needs to learn how to meditate. There are several important reasons that meditation is part of the Apprentice curriculum. First, learning to meditate teaches the Apprentice quite valuable traits necessary for successful magick: concentration, visualization, willpower, and patience. Because of the relaxation required for the body, the Apprentice also is likely to start receiving brief messages from the dragons and beings from the Otherworld. Dragons are excellent at telepathy, but other beings may send the message in a symbol code. Use common sense. Ask your teacher dragons to help decode each message. Never make any drastic moves or decisions based solely on messages from

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the Otherworld. If the message suggests anything that is against your ethics, morals, or better judgment, consider it a "bad" connection and refuse to accept further communication with the being in question.

Many people think that you must have no thoughts ever in your mind in order to achieve the correct meditative state. This is untrue, especially for Westerners. The great Paramahansa Yogananda pointed this out in his autobiography. He said his mission in the West was to teach people Eastern mysteries and ancient knowledge in a way they could understand. He was adamant that, since the West thinks very differently from the East, people in the West should allow their minds to follow symbols, pictures, or a "story line," so that we can find our way to the Divine Center. In dragon magick, the Divine Center is the same as the center of the Five Inner Rings. Same idea, different words.

Remember that the beginning and the ending of all guided meditations are done in the same manner each time. Refer to "Entering the Five Inner Rings," which begins on page 7, for the text of the beginning and ending of each meditation, including this one, and for additional information about prerecording and preparing for meditations.

You are standing at the bottom of a slope that leads upward to the crown of a hill. The slope is completely covered with huge boulders that look impassable. The rubble appears to be a maze of tumbled stones, a questionable pathway where one could easily become lost. To add to the problem, the Sun is sinking behind the hill. The deep shadows of the forest surrounding you make you uncomfortable, as if the forest hides dangers yet unseen. The summit of the hill seems to be the safest place around. You begin to thread your way among the boulders, seeking a way to reach the top.

"Hurry! You must reach the cave before darkness comes!"

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You stop and look around you. Just above your head and to your left, a very small dragon hovers in midair, her thin wings making a humming sound as she holds her position.

"My name is Mirraglas," the dragon says. "Follow me, and I will get you to the cave in time."

You look below at the dark shadows under the trees and see stealthy, sly movements there. "Show me the way, please," you tell the little dragon.

Mirraglas quickly leads you along an intricate, tangled path up the hill. You glance up once in your climb and see that there actually is the narrow mouth of a cave near the crest of the hill. You move faster when you hear the slide of pebbles at the bottom of the slope. You don't look back. You have no desire to know what is there. You only know, deep inside, that when you reach the cave, you will be totally safe.

Panting from your quick ascent in the deepening gloom, you follow Mirraglas through the narrow cave opening. Instantly, a small fire ignites on a tall, flat stone at the back of the rough cave. The image of the fire is reflected hundreds of times in the quartz crystals that cover the walls in their jigsaw patterns. An eerie rustling ever so softly sighs through the cavern, along with a gentle air current that seems to come and go. You find yourself synchronizing your own breathing with this current.

"If you are determined and willing to be an Apprentice of the Five Inner Rings, you must go to the altar." Mirraglas flutters in front of you, a look of concern on her little dragon face. "But I cannot show you the way this time."

She turns and speeds away to a perch on one of the crystals.

When you look back at where you think the fire is, you are confused. You are not certain of the exact location because of the perfect

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reflections all around you. You blink your eyes, but that doesn't reveal the true fire. The cavern seems to be filled with hundreds of flickering flames.

You look up at Mirraglas, who is watching your every move. You remember that you were directly facing the altar fire when the little dragon fluttered before your face. You stare straight ahead until you find what you are sure is the original fire. Ignoring all the reflections around you, you slowly make your way, step by step, your gaze never losing sight of the flames as they dance and tremble in the slight wind that comes and goes through the cave.

Hesitantly, you reach out one hand to grasp the flat stone while you run the other hand above the fire. You flinch when you feel the blistering heat.

"So, you have come at last." The deep voice comes from above the altar where the rock ledges and wall are covered with shadows. "I wondered if you were brave enough to climb the hill and intelligent enough to find the true flames."

The scratch of claws on rock and the slide of scaled, leathery hide just beyond your sight quickly bring up the mental idea that you are not alone in the dark with just one small dragon. The slight wind is now erratic in its movement, as if many large dragons are gathered around you.

You peer up at the rocks and shadows until you finally make out the huge head of a dragon staring back at you. You realize the dragon was there all the time. You just hadn't been observant. The long neck with the triangular head is lifted high into the shadows near the roof of the cavern, yet the glittering eyes see you clearly.

Very carefully, you look around you on all sides. Here, you catch a glimpse of other pairs of large eyes reflecting the firelight. There, you

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see an enormous foot barbed with sharp claws. Overhead, you hear a quick whish *as another dragon stretches and refolds its mighty wings.*

"If the sponsors and teachers of this human are present, come forward now."

You hold your breath, wondering if you will be rejected before you even begin your studies. You give a sign of relief when you feel heat from dragon bodies close to each side and behind you. One gives a gentle puff of air against your neck.

"We will work with this human," says a deep voice above you. "We will sponsor her (him) as an Apprentice of the Five Inner Rings."

"So let it be recorded." The first dragon reaches a clawed hand out of the darkness and lays an open book beside the fire. The cover of this book is worn at the corners, the edges of the parchment yellow with age. You lean forward and see that each page contains a long list of names. The dragon's other hand reaches out to hand you a feather quill.

"Do you take oath to diligently learn the ways of the Apprentice of the Five Inner Rings? And do you take oath to keep silent about any knowledge you are taught within those Rings? I, Aldram, Keeper of the Book, ask for your truthful answer."

Now is the time for you to make a very serious decision. If you don't feel comfortable giving this oath, tell the dragon this. You will immediately be returned to your physical body without harm. The dragons will work with you on a mundane level to learn magick.

If you answer yes, take the pen and sign your name to the bottom of the list in the book. One after the other, your sponsors take the quill and sign their names in a strange script below yours.

A low humming of many dragon voices fills the cave as the last dragon lays the quill beside the book. Smaller dragons of every size

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gather around you, laughing in happiness. You hear some of the larger dragons leave, but your personal sponsors now let their invisibility shields dissolve so you can see them. You feel excitement fill your mind as you think about learning the secrets of the Five Inner Rings.

"It is time for you to return to your world," Aldram says as he gathers up the book and quill. "Mirraglas will take you home. You will meet with your teachers again, soon enough. You are now a Daughter/Son of the Dragon."

The small dragon flies just ahead of you, leading you toward the back of the cave. You pass many huge, shadowed figures that you know are dragons, but you cannot see them clearly. Mirraglas perches on the top of an archway, pointing with her small clawed hand for you to go through into the bright light beyond.

Code, Color, and Other Items of the Apprentice

Each of the Inner Rings has its own special code and color. The code of the Apprentice is "To be called is to be destined. Know yourself well." There are no such things as destinies greater than others. We all have an important part to play in this life, and with the dragons. By knowing yourself well—truthfully looking at all your abilities, warts and all—you are less likely to place yourself in any magickal danger. You also are more likely to listen to your dragon teachers and guardians.

A true blue color, the hue of calm emotions and the psychic, marks the Apprentice level of the Rings. This color can be displayed in clothing. However, the Apprentice will also want to get two feet of half-inch blue ribbon. At this point, the ribbon can be draped over the shoulders when meditating. Later, especially when reaching the Mystic level, this colored ribbon will be incorporated into a magickal project that will have lasting memories for you of your journey through the Five Inner Rings.

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Symbols play an important part in every dragon magician's life. Even though the older dragons are very adept at telepathy, the very young dragons find it easier to communicate with humans through the use of symbols. The dragon teachers of the Inner Rings chose a specific written symbol as an identification sign for the students of each Ring.

For the Apprentice, the master teachers decided to use an elvenstar, or a star with seven points. Seven has been considered the most sacred of numbers for at least three thousand years. To the ancient Egyptians, it meant eternal life and perfection. Today the elvenstar is called the mystic star, or elf star. Tracing its design with one finger has much the same effect on the subconscious mind as does tracing or walking a labyrinth: an ease in contacting and studying with spiritual teachers of the Otherworld.

The symbol of the elvenstar, or elf star, is shown on page 204.

Certain stones also are considered to be symbols for the ranks of the Inner Rings, and a crystal point is thought to be so important that it is required of all students. This quartz crystal point can be worn as jewelry, carried as a pocket stone, or left in your sacred space to generate energy. It does not need to be clear or perfect in shape. Some of the best crystals I've used have fractures, inclusions, mists, veils, and other "flaws." Choose a crystal that feels good in your hands; don't choose it due to the way it looks, how big it is, or how much it costs.

Other stones that will be of use to the Apprentice are amber, amethyst, aventurine, and moss agate. The Apprentice may use small tumbled chips of these stones for magickal and ritual use. Amber does come in several colors, but at this point I recommend that the golden-reddish-brown amber be used because of its versatility. This color of amber is also less expensive and easier to find. Although you don't need to buy every stone listed in each section of this book unless the stones have a vital use for you, you really do need those four stones: amber, amethyst, aventurine, and moss agate. When laid out on your

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altar cloth, they represent the four Element dragons. The personal crystal point also is a necessity.

As an Apprentice, you should handle your stones often in order to become familiar with the different feel of their energies, the colors of the stones themselves, and what they say to you personally. Yes, all stones "speak" to humans if we take the time to listen.

Golden-brown amber helps to clear mental confusion. If used with a crystal in meditation, amber can aid in opening the Akashic Records, or the stories of your other lifetimes. Since dragons live a very long time, it is quite possible that your present dragon teachers have worked with you before.

You can find amethyst in clusters, geodes, and points. It can be a very pale purple or a very dark purple, or any shade in between. This stone increases the activity in the right, or creative, brain, especially in developing psychic talents. At the same time, it can help you see through illusion of any kind.

Green aventurine attracts unexpected adventures, something every Apprentice should expect. Dragons delight in revealing the unexpected. It is also a prosperity and good fortune stone.

Moss agate is a beautiful white or almost transparent gray, with moss-shaped inclusions in various colors. It is one of the most powerful healing stones, and it gives a strong clarity of thought and intent in magick.

The Dragon Enchanter section of this book contains a much longer list of stones, their meanings, and the type of dragon connected with each stone. This list can be helpful if you are interested in learning more in-depth knowledge about a particular stone.

Magickal Clothing in General

The type of clothing worn by a student of the Five Inner Rings should be comfortable, in a style you like, and should make you lay aside the everyday and put on your magickal personality. Women may wear trousers and tunics,

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while men may choose to wear wizardly gowns. Or the student can wear one type of clothing one time and another set of clothing the next. You may even decide to tailor your clothes to match the Inner Ring in which you're studying. It is a personal choice. The only rules here are that clothing for special rituals be comfortable, and ritual clothes are not to be worn as everyday garments. Good places to get clothing ideas are Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) meetings and Renaissance fairs.

Most magicians of the Inner Rings eventually end up with capes, dragon jewelry, a headband of cloth, metal, or leather, a leather belt (even for women) hung with pouches and bags, and at least one specially decorated robe. Mystics frequently wear an embellished gown or tunic and trousers under their robes, which are open down the front and have long full sleeves. Enchanters, shamans, and healers usually carry a shoulder bag filled with jars, smaller bags containing their necessary supplies and stones, and their altar cloth.

Apprentice Ritual Tools

Magicians of all kinds tend to gather a wide variety of tools for both magick and healing. Or they do so simply because they like what they find. You can easily guess how long a magician has been practicing by the pack-rat coziness of her or his sacred space or ritual room. The energy in such a place seems to attract people, whether or not they believe in magick.

There are a few essential items that an Apprentice must have as soon as it is possible to find, make, or purchase them. These items are likely to be used all your magickal life—or, in the case of the Dragon Hoard, until you wear it out or fill it up, making it necessary to replace the book. No tool has any power except that which you channel through it. The actual power source is you and your connecting link to everything in the Multiverse.

You will need a three-foot square of cloth, decorated or plain, to place on the floor, or on the ground if you don't have an altar. A fringed fancy shawl

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makes a nice cloth if you prefer something decorative. A low table or even a chest also works well. If you have a permanent altar, you would cover it with your cloth.

A very good astrological calendar is a must for any serious magician. This calendar must show the four Moon phases accurately and show which sign the Moon is in on any given day.

If possible, it is advisable to have a small cupboard, box, or chest of drawers in which to store your magickal materials. Very small bowls or geodes to hold sea salt and spring water are necessary to cleanse a ritual area. Check a toy store for tiny dish sets for children. Even if you do have a fairly accurate sense of direction, you should get a small compass so you can find true north. Frankincense or patchouli sticks or cones are also good for smudging yourself and the area if you can't find small bundles of sage.

Please remember that the number of such tools you acquire, or don't acquire, has nothing to do with your ability to perform dragon magick. The presence of tools is to get the left brain to work with, instead of against, the right brain. Tools are merely channels for the archetypal, universal energy that magicians direct through themselves.

At this time, the most crucial tools for an Apprentice to make, or put together, are two books: one called the Dragon Hoard, the other called Dragon Secrets. Although beautiful bound, blank books exist on the market, these are practical only for Dragon Secrets, which is a journal and record of your daily experiences, showing how your life and view of your life changes as you progress through the Rings.

The Dragon Hoard is a collection of rituals, spells, results of magickal spells, and such. Therefore, it is better that the Apprentice buy a three-ring binder and a set of index tabs for this project. The binder can be any color, covered with cloth and glued-on objects, or it can have a design painted on it. I suggest the use of a three-ring binder because it will make it easy to write

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on pages outside of the binder, copy and replace messy pages, and increase the total number of pages as you progress through the Rings.

On the very first page of Dragon Hoard and Dragon Secrets, you should write: 'This book of secrets is written by the hand of [your magickal name]." You will choose your name when you enter the Enchanter Ring. Sometimes this sentence is 'These secrets are in the hand of [your magickal name]." These are your personal books and may be decorated any way you wish. This sentence may be written in the dragon alphabet or any font that appeals to you. You can write it with brightly colored markers, ink, or paint. You can also add colorful designs around this statement.

The tabbed index pages will help you quickly find what you need in the Dragon Hoard. The first section should be marked Rituals. The second most important section is Spells, followed by Herb Secrets, Stone Secrets, and Dragon Names (which will include notes on the qualities and powers of each dragon you meet).

The last section is simply called Results. After you have kept proper notes in this part of the Hoard for a time, you will realize its value. In the Results area, you write a brief name and reason for every spell you do, such as "Finding Lost Objects, misplaced library book." Under the spell name, write down the ingredients you used, what the Moon phase was and in which zodiac sign, the day of the week, the actual date for the season of the year, and whether the spell did or didn't work. Also include your personal feelings about the spell before and during its performance. This record will help you determine why some of your spells work and others don't. The reason may be as simple as wrong ingredients or as complicated as your feelings about doing the spell—or the feelings of anyone watching, if you allowed anyone to watch.

It is also your choice what kind of pen you use to write this all out. Quills are not required, nor are they practical. Regular writing pens work much better. Just be certain that the ink isn't the kind that smears, for you will get water

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droplets on pages at times. Black ink is best. You will find that your blue Apprentice ribbon makes an excellent bookmark, and using it thusly ensures that you know where the ribbon is.

The Dragon Lore book can also be a small ringed notebook, or choose a blank bound book with a decorated hard cover. There are many spiral-bound books with beautifully sculpted covers. However, these can be expensive, and the number of pages is often scant. So I suggest you browse through a bookstore that carries blank journals. You should try to write some comment in this journal every day, even if it is only the date and local weather. It is useful to dig deeper into your feelings and attitudes here, positive or negative. These musings will later show you how far you have traveled in your personal life and in your dragon studies.

If you have a bad pattern of habits that keep recurring, you will be able to see this in your journal. You then will need to set goals to break the habits and replace them with positive action. Being human, we all need to work on perfecting ourselves.

All this being said, the Apprentice doesn't need everything listed. Neither does the student of any Ring. All each student is required to have are the vital tools she or he will definitely need for a particular level.

Understanding the Otherworld and the Gates

What makes the Otherworld so difficult to understand and believe in is that it occupies the same space as the Earth plane, yet it is elastic in nature. There is no linear thought or any concept of time there. Time itself is a human-conceived idea. Dragons and Otherworld beings can move quickly about the Otherworld and the Multiverse because they are not hampered by any preconceived idea of space or time.

All teachings say the two worlds interpenetrate each other but have different vibrations, which makes this interpenetration possible. I could never find a

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satisfying scientific explanation for this until a military friend talked to me about the tachyon (a subatomic particle) theory of quantum physics. This theory makes perfect sense of the dual occupation of space. I am not a fan of quantum physics, or of any similar scientific ideas, as I am primarily a right-brained individual. However, I will try to explain this in a way everyone can understand.

Like electrons, tachyons can't be seen. We know of their existence only by the manner in which they make other things behave. For a very long time, scientists believed that nothing could travel faster than the speed of light. Then quantum-physics scientists spent thirteen years specifically studying the strange appearance and disappearance of electrons, the very real possibility of a negative density, and strange swirls of energy movement. Just as with electrons, which we can't see, physicists had to accept another and nearly opposite theory of tachyons, which we also can't see.

Because of vibrational differences, the two areas (worlds) occupy the same place. On occasion, an individual tachyon shows itself in our world. Thus, both worlds need each other to exist. And the wonder of it all is that both fields exist at the same time in the same space. This is the exact same story, without the fancy scientific words, that shamans and mystics have told us for thousands of years.

Tachyons cannot travel slower than the speed of light, while electrons cannot exceed that speed. When tachyons gain energy, they get slower. When they lose energy, they gain speed. No one is certain what the top speed of a tachyon is. All scientists know is that electrons seem to appear out of nowhere, and then they eventually disappear back into the nowhere. Although no one has concretely identified the source of electrons, it is quite possible they are produced in the tachyon field or realm, exist in our universe for an unknown period of time as our blood cells do, and then are reabsorbed back into the tachyon field to be recycled.

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As an ultra-swift particle, tachyons have some very different features, unknown before (or at least unaccepted) in our universe. A tachyon travels faster than light. Unlike the electron, the tachyon gains energy when it slows and loses energy when it speeds up. It can also go forward or backward in time. In other words, in the tachyon realm there definitely is no such thing as time, nor are there any barriers to visiting any area of what we call time.

The tachyon field is extremely dense, but it can't be measured because it is a negative state. In other words, it mirrors the positive universe in which we live. It also creates, sustains, and energizes our physical universe. Its energy is potentially omnipotent, yet it is harmless to biological organisms. When an imbalance of positive energy appears in our universe, the tachyon field flows into the breach, nourishing all living organisms until balance is regained. The nervous system and brain of any creature comprise a highly sophisticated antenna and receiver that has learned to absorb, process, and transform tachyon energy into "food" for thinking, movement, and creativity.

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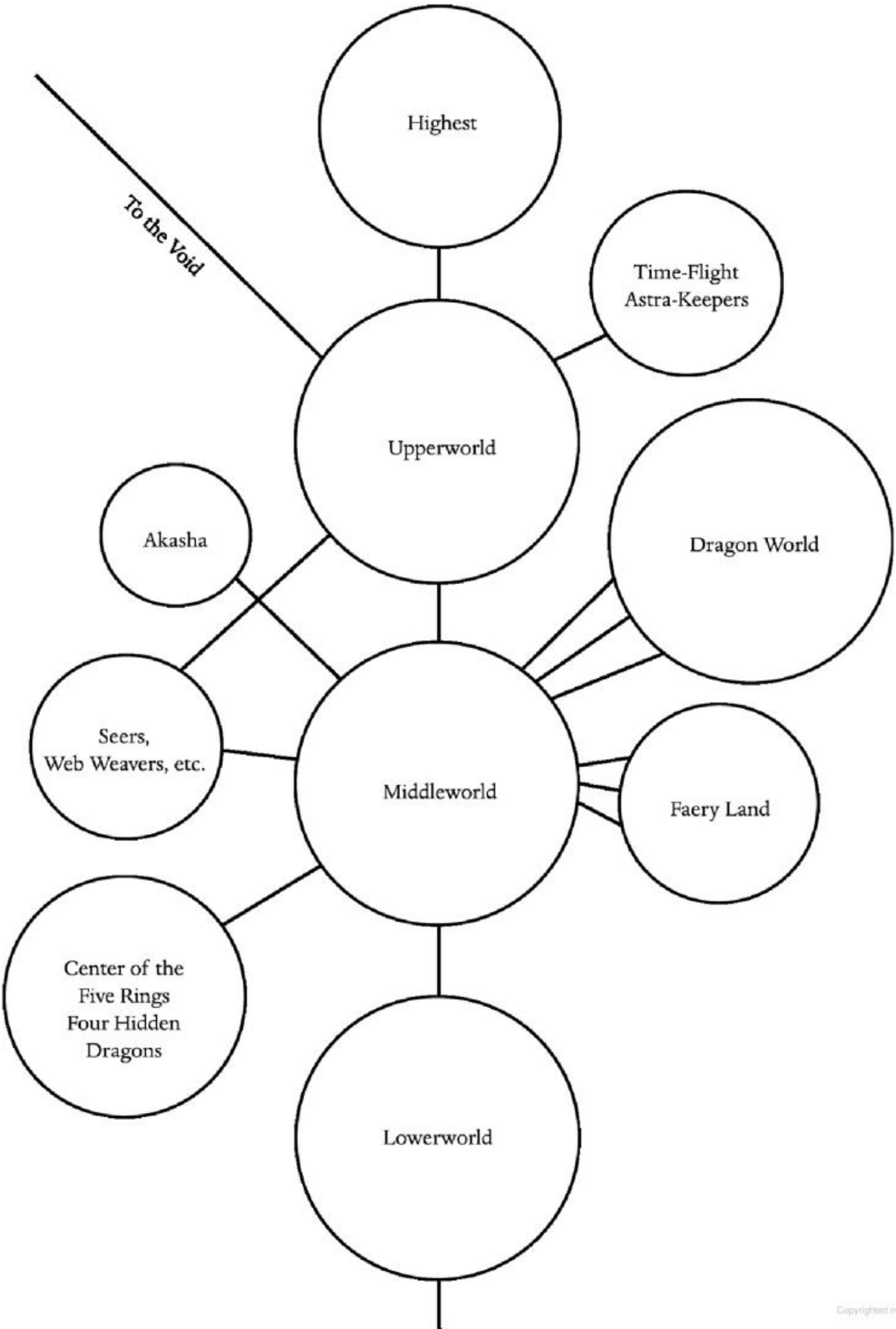

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Map of the Otherworld

We are looking at a symbiotic theory in which neither universe could exist without the other. As energy flows from one universe to the other (and it does this all the time), there are swirls of perpetual but gentle movement. Psychics, healers, mystics, and magicians have learned how to tap into this energy. Even more exciting, these people have discovered how to temporarily travel to, and gain information from, this interpenetrating universe, the Otherworld. The logical explanation for two worlds in the same space is that each vibrates at a different frequency. Therefore, to move our essential astral bodies from this world to the Otherworld, we must learn how to temporarily change our vibrations to match the Otherworld's—and then change the vibrations again to return to this world. The Dragon Apprentice now should begin to understand the seriousness of her or his studies. Unprepared or unbelieving humans who find themselves suddenly in the Otherworld could suffer mental imbalances from their experiences. The Apprentice's only reliable guides are her or his dragon teachers and friends.

Added to this amazing cosmos, there are a multitude of gateways to yet more worlds and realms. Some gateways are fixed and don't move, while others appear and disappear from one level of our Otherworld to another level on no particular schedule. If we consider these worlds beyond, and we must, there is not just one universe but a Multiverse of worlds and realms for us to explore. All universes would be in pairs—positive and negative—and all with gateways to yet more worlds.

There are many gates to the Dragon World in our Otherworld. Most of these gates are in the Middleworld, along with the gateways to Faery Land and many other exciting but strange realms. Your dragon teachers will introduce you to the Middleworld and its gates first, as this area is the easiest to understand and relate to.

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Refer back to number 10 in the dragon code of ethics: "What happens to one stone reflects on all." This can be applied to the Multiverse as well as our universe. Since both worlds mirror each other, what a dragon student or any person does, or thinks hard enough on, in this world will be manifested in the Otherworld before bouncing back, full-grown, to this world. That is why magicians tell students to concentrate on, visualize, and claim as real whatever they want their magick to do. If the tachyon field, or Otherworld, can create electron particles or rebalance our universe as needed, its energy and ability to manifest something is as easy as blinking.

However, to ensure greater rates of success, the dragon magician must learn to prepare for the desired manifestation by performing spells with certain ingredients, movements, and words that resonate in a special way. Understanding this portion of dragon information is a huge step for a new Dragon Apprentice.

Magicians and shamans have always known there are other worlds because they do, and did, visit them to find new healing power, get a clear look at the future for their people, and work with Otherworld beings to prevent disasters.

The Otherworld is usually described as being of three levels: the Middleworld (which is a kind of alternative, time-space world to this one); the Upperworld (a high spiritual level), and the Lowerworld. The Lowerworld is not an evil place, nor is it a prison for evil people. It is merely a level of the Otherworld that has a different kind of vibration, as do all the other levels. However, I have discovered two more levels, which add sensible depth to the Otherworld.

The Upperworld has a very high, refined spiritual vibration. Here the traveler finds all the ancient deities from every culture. This level is the home of the dragon Kaudra and her special cave. One may also see many angelic messengers coming and going between all levels of the Otherworld from an unseen level far above this one.

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This highest upper level, the Highest, isn't visited by humans or beings from other worlds. It is the dwelling place of the Goddess and the God, and the Supreme Creative Source (or whatever name you apply to the force and thought behind the existence of everything). Only archangels, angels, and a very few dragons enter this high area. They act as messengers for the Goddess and the God.

The Goddess and the God, also called the Lady and the Lord and the Great Mother and Great Father, intermediate for the Supreme Creative Source. Their visible forms are connected with the Source at all times. They and the Source are actually inseparable, for they are all three one abstract Being who is beyond our comprehension. Although all creation everywhere in the Multiverse is constantly connected, the Goddess and the God are so entwined with the Source that they have identical vibrations. They *are* the Source projecting itself in female and male images, so that humans may understand the abstract better.

Between the Goddess and the unseen Source, but closer to the Lady, sleeps the oldest dragon alive. She is so old that not even dragons remember her original name. She is known only as "She Who Lives Within the Greatest." This ancient dragon has a constant telepathic link with the Goddess. On rare occasions, she will exchange thoughts with those who stand at the only Gate to the Highest. Her misty form wavers in and out of sight as she balances her existence in the vibrations between the Upperworld and the Highest. When this dragon does open her eyes, she reveals their gleaming silver color.

The Upperworld is a level of great beauty and wisdom. Here the traveler will find all the cultural deities who were ever worshipped on our world, each pantheon in its own area. These pantheons will communicate with anyone, as long as they are treated with respect. They continue to exist through the energy supplied to them by human thoughts and worship. Because of the renewal of interest and practice pertaining to certain ancient cultures, some pantheons have a stronger physical form than others. There is a Shining Ones Shrine for

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each set of the ancient Earth deities, where one can ask to speak with the gods and goddesses of that pantheon. Although there are also deity shrines for other worlds in the Multiverse, these aren't open to those from Earth.

Every level except the Highest and the Underworld also have Gates that lead to side areas or other levels. Most of these Gates are stationary, while a few are called "wandering" and are not considered safe to enter.

The Upperworld has four such Gates. The Travelers' Gate is decorated with a spiral design. It takes you to any level of the Otherworld except the Highest and the Underworld. The Web Gate, marked with a cobweb painting, leads to the special side area of the Web Weavers. (See the diagram on page 39 of the Otherworld levels and the Gates).

Encircled by twelve stars and the twelve zodiac signs, the Zodiac Gate opens into the side area of the Time-Flight and Astra-Keeper clans. The Dome of Multiversal Stars is a sacred workplace with an enormous, very complicated metal structure inside the domed building. This structure shows the actual placement of all planets in all inhabited galaxies on all levels of the Multiverse. When a rebirth of a soul is approved by the judges in the Lowerworld Hall of Justice, these two groups of dragons determine the appropriately matching birth time, place, and conditions of birth for each soul. This new chart will be influenced by whatever karma is necessary for growth.

The Void Gate with its ominous black circle is used only by Chaos dragons. If the Chaos dragons want to speak with you, you won't go to the Void. They will come to you.

All levels of the Otherworld, and the side areas attached to them, have a number of sacred places to find peace, to reflect on your life, and to consider whatever is in your thoughts. Some in the Middleworld reconnect you with Earth energy to keep you from "losing" yourself and becoming too "spacey." A few in the Lowerworld offer safe places to reflect on any past lives with which you are familiar.

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These sacred sites can appear as monolithic, moss-covered stones, standing singly, in circles, or in the shape of ancient tombs—two or three as uprights with a slab stone for a roof. Some are huge, irregularly shaped boulders with roughly chiseled steps leading upward to a "chair" for contemplation. Other sacred sites are tiny streams or wells that trickle into small carved stones. These basins can be used for scrying, as with a crystal ball or dark cup of water. It isn't unusual for spirit guides and animal allies to meet you in these sites. Some of these stones will be crystal-filled geodes—the open cavities large and deep enough to sit, stand, or lie down in.

One of the sacred sites in the Upperworld is the crystal cave found near the Gate to the Highest and protected by the Kaudra, a dragon with glittering crystal scales. Kaudra belongs to the Web Weavers; these powerful female dragons are part of a category of seer dragons. Inside her huge cave, with its shadowy chambers, is a huge, transparent, bubble-like crystal known as the Dream Chamber. The Dhuaar, or High Council of the Multiverse, meets in the Dream Chamber to ensure that the members' thoughts are not influenced by vibrational "chatter." The High Council is convened to discuss events and happenings of vital importance to the balance of the Multiverse.

Many side chambers of this cavern contain meditation seats, small shrines, counselor benches, and thrones. If the God or the Goddess appears, they sit on the throne with archangels and angels standing beside them. When Kaudra considers you worthy and ready, she will send you into the empty Chamber to be cleansed and to open your path to your highest spiritual connections.

The Garden of Wisdom and Solitude, enclosed by a high hedge, is an endless garden of all cultures. It has a multitude of shrines, temples, gazebos, and flower-covered shelters to explore. Paths lined with every known flower lead to small streams, waterfalls, fountains, and little bridges over ponds. You may meet other students here from throughout the Multiverse.

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The Shrine of Remembrance is an important sacred site for spiritual growth and the removal of some kinds of karma. Here you can ask the attending angel to see and speak with deceased friends and loved ones. However, you may find yourself facing someone you didn't get along with in life. If this happens, that phase of your life has a barrier that needs to be removed by forgiveness. When both of you ask or give forgiveness for whatever wrongs were done, that spirit will leave. If it doesn't, ask the attending angel to send it away. Sometimes you don't know why there was a problem between the two of you. If the person doesn't truthfully forgive you, then at least forgive that person, so that energy can forever be removed from your future lives.

The Path of Return Light is a multidimensional open-roofed building of black marble. It exists on every level of the Otherworld except the Underworld and the Highest. If you stand on, or walk across, the bronze medallion set in the floor, you will be returned at once to your physical body. Of course, you can return at any time simply by thinking of your body. The medallion in this building appears to make your return easier, although actually it is a little slower because, at the same time, it rebalances your astral energy centers, called chakras.

The Temple of Beginnings and Endings is a little-used temple near the Void Gate, used by the Chaos dragons. No one visits the realm of these powerful dragons. If they have something to communicate to you, they find you. This Temple is where they teleport you, either during your sleep or while you are exploring the Otherworld. I have seen the inside of this Temple, but I've never been called there.

The most delicate and simple of the Upperworld sacred spots is the Temple of All-Healing. Constructed of very pale pink stone, the façade supported by pillars of a darker pink, this healing place is filled with celestial music of the most soothing sounds. Plain comfortable beds fill all the rooms. In the center of each room is a large crystal in a basin of pure spring water. A variety of healing

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angels and spirit guides work on anyone who asks for healing within this building. No one is refused, whether the illness is physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual.

The Middleworld is a fantastical level that is the dwelling place for elves, faeries, unicorns, and other mythological creatures—in addition to presenting the human traveler with a variety of possible ways our world could have gone. Animal allies are sometimes discovered on this level.

The Web Weaver area also has direct access to the Middleworld. The Web Weavers have the authority to send you to the dragon clan they believe will best help you. This clan of Star-Moon dragon lineage (see "Categories of Dragons" in section 3 of this book) works with the present and future potential happenings in the Multiverse. Its leader is Aia Cardys. The clan can be reached through the Web Gate in the Upperworld or the Mysteries Gate of the Seers of the Merkabah. This Gate has an image of a hooded figure holding a sword. Their series of different architectural palaces contain a sacred spot in an alcove of each building, an alcove that gradually helps you build your psychic abilities during meditations.

This side area, which sits between worlds and time, is also the place that holds certain other groups. The scenery changes in each group's territory here. The Seers of the Merkabah live in a volcanic cave in snowy mountains.

The Teachers' Gate, with its five different wands, leads to your choice of the co-magicians or the Ring Initiators. The co-magicians occupy a mountain-ringed valley. The Ring Initiators live in caves at one end of this valley. Aldram, Keeper of the Book, spends most of his time here with the Initiators, although he also has a misty, cloudlike dwelling near the Void. Aldram keeps his vast collection of ancient scrolls, books, and visually programmed crystals in the Void castle.

The Seers of All Time, including Tiamat, have several elaborate castles on the cliffs beside a great sea. This all-female group is composed primarily of

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very ancient, powerful deities from Earth's history, with a few powerful ancient seers from other worlds. You can reach them by using the Ancient Seers' Gate, decorated with a crystal ball in which one can see constantly moving images. Tiamat, the Great Mother dragon, spends most of her time in the Middleworld, guarding the Gate of Balance.

The Akasha Recorders live a quiet, almost solitary existence in their small side realm, keeping the Akashic Records up to date and advising the judges who oversee the rebirth process. You can visit the Temple of Akashic Records by going through the Past Lives Gate with its design of a large decorated book. Inside this Temple, you will find assistants ready to find your personal records, so you can determine what part of your past still affects your present life—and could affect your future unless you make changes.

The Sacred Spirit Gate of rainbow colors leads you back to the Upperworld, where the Goddess sits inside the Gate to the Highest. If you go through the misty Dream Gate, you will again be in the Upperworld near the dragon Kaudra.

There are three different Dragon Gates, all of dark wood, bound with elaborate iron hinges and decorations. Each Gate opens in a different area of Dragon World, a fascinating area where dragon families spend their leisure time and hatch their eggs.

There is one large sacred area in Dragon World that is quite extraordinary. This is the triple ring of monolithic stones, called the Circles of Distant Truths. From the outside, these stones look and feel rough, appear splattered with lichen and moss, and are cold to the touch. When you walk between the stones and stand inside a ring of stones, though, the view is very different. The monoliths become almost translucent, providing you with a slick surface that shows you a portion of ancient dragon history or some virtue or truth that could enlighten you. Unless your co-magician dragon accompanies you, however, you are unlikely to understand what you see and hear. Still, the mere

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fact of walking around each ring of stones brings a peacefulness, healing, and guidance for whatever positive path or goal you are attempting to reach. The more you study and work with dragons, spirit guides, and angels, the more information you can gather within these stone rings.

The Gate of Wondrous Things hides an antechamber with three more Gates. The inner Gates are engraved with strange symbols that humans seldom see. All three of these Gates open into a section of Faery Land—one Gate each to the elves, the human-sized Fae, and the Small Folk, who interact so much with humans.

There are three sacred places within Faery Land, places that defy description, except to say they are nature-based and very powerful. These are the Palace of the Seelie Court (the Fae), the Palace of the Unseelie Court (a branch of the Fae), and the Palace of the Elf King and Queen. Time spent in Faery Land can reconnect you to the nature spirits and the deep Earth wisdom they have.

The Rings Gate, with its pattern of five concentric circles, takes students to the side area of the astral school, the space of the Five Inner Rings. Although the four Hidden Gates of Wisdom are close by, you won't be able to use these at this time, for they are found in the center of the Five Rings. Only Mystics who have passed through their initiation are allowed to travel these paths. Each Gate is guarded by one of the Four Hidden Dragons and leads to a separate Mystery School.

The last permanently fixed Gate is the Gate of Balance near the Sacred Well of Balance. This half-white, half-black portal goes to the Lowerworld, where the Lords of Light and Dark dragons wait beside the other end of this well. Both the Gate and the wellspring are connected, with power flowing in both directions. The great greenish gold dragon Tiamat is found near the Middleworld end of this Gate. Through Tiamat's guidance, you can see through all the illusions you have built around yourself. Only truth can be seen in this

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mystical well and in the eyes and thoughts of Tiamat, the Great Dragon Mother of Earth.

Some Gates in the Otherworld are not fixed, but move from place to place without notice or on any schedule. These are termed "wandering" Gates. Eight of these unnamed Gates in the Middleworld should not be used without the company of your co-magician dragon. There is no visual method to tell positive wandering Gates from negative wandering Gates, although the dragons have some way of discerning which is which. It is therefore safer not to enter any wandering Gates by yourself.

The Grove of Shadows and Twilight can be rather frightening when you first venture into this mass of tall evergreen trees. The paths often wander in circles but never reach the same place twice. This is where you will first meet your Shadow Self, the darker side of yourself. (See section 3, "The Dragon Shaman," for more information on the Shadow Self.) Establishing communication with the Shadow Self will be important later, when you retrieve pieces of a shattered soul. However unsettling this forest is, it is a sacred grove where you can meet and talk to the "darker" deities of Earth's pantheons. These are *not* demons or the devil. They have important duties to fulfill in keeping balance. They also have valuable information about life, personal balance, self-acceptance, and gaining true self-confidence without ego inflation.

In an out-of-the-way place in the Middleworld, you will discover a compound of many different types of temples. This is the holy area of the Temples of Ancient Ways. Every spiritual path that did, or does, exist on Earth is represented here by instructors and counselors in their religion's temple. Teachers of the old religions outnumber the modern ones. You can speak with any of the instructors, either about possible changes to your personal path and studies, or to learn something new.

The Gardens of Healing are similar to the healing gardens in the Upperworld. Set in a serene, beautiful variety of gardens are buildings that

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represent different types of healing powers, both old and new. You can ask for a personal healing or instruction in a healing method.

The Lowerworld is a level of vibrations heavier than those in the other two levels. However, this does not make it evil. Ancient underworld deities live here, such as the Crone with her cauldron of rebirth.

The Lowerworld's heavier atmosphere recognizes the vibrations humans experience when they go through a dark night of the soul. When they face traumatic changes in their lives and must look back at both the good and the bad, they go through the Crone's rebirthing ritual. Her Sacred Cauldron of Rebirth not only sponges clean the conscious minds of reincarnating souls into actual physical bodies, but is used for the soul rebirth of initiates.

This great black Cauldron, hidden away in a shadowy cavern reached by twisting underground tunnels, helps the tormented minds and hearts of physical travelers who are faced with traumatic life changes and are in great need of healing from painful personal losses. Four shallow black bowls of ever-burning, leaping fire burn at each of the four directions, making strange jumping shadows dance on the cavern walls. These flames reflect the silver designs on the Cauldron and radiate an awesome power.

This is also the site of the Karmic Councils. Most deceased humans awaiting reincarnation occupy this level, although they are free to visit any level you can. It is possible that you could meet any of your ancestors at any time during your journeys, particularly in the Lowerworld. However, you are certain to meet some of them at the Shrine of the Ancestors. This onion-domed building sits in a garden laid out in geometric patterns.

All the incoming and outgoing souls are brought to the Hall of Justice and Rebirth. Those who are returning are told what karmic debits and/or credits their recent life accrued for them. Anyone, even a traveler, can speak in their defense. Those souls preparing to be reborn discuss their upcoming life with the Council. Some are willing to take on the duties that allow other humans

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in their "new" family to work out problems. That doesn't, however, mean that those people will use the advantage. Other souls accept their new life plan with resignation, while still others are in total rebellion. If the rebellious souls present the Council with valid reasons for their disagreement, such as "This plan didn't work before" or "The people involved have changed for the worse and are no longer receptive to help," then the Council may postpone the rebirth for a time of reconsideration.

The Lords of the Light and Dark dragons can be found near the Sacred Well and the Gate of Balance. Using this gateway will return you to Tiamat in the Middleworld. These dragons can be helpful in pointing out subtle imbalances you have and suggesting methods to rebalance.

Often, the souls being reconsidered use the Glory Gate, near the Hall of Justice, to go to the Upperworld until they are called again. There they talk with the dragon Kaudra. They also can visit all the sacred places of that level, while they search for the truth of their long path through a number of lives. Also, they can seek help from the Goddess, the God, any elder dragons, or angels in their quest to find truth.

The third Gate in the Lowerworld is the Journey Gate. This is a wandering Gate usable only by Dragon Warriors, Dragon Mystics, and the dragons themselves. It will take you to any desired designation.

There is only one level below the Lowerworld—that of the Underworld. There are no side areas to the Underworld, and only the Prison Gate leads in and out of this heavily guarded level. The Underworld is a type of maximum-security prison, created to hold truly evil beings and energies. The souls kept confined here revel in murder, torture, and any other negative deed they can do.

When the dragon student reaches a certain level, she or he is brought here, accompanied by at least two experienced dragons. One of these will be a Moosha, or a Warrior of the Savage Heart clan. Here you will see fights to the death between rival Underworld groups. They destroy each other, only to

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have the body parts rejoined and life returned to each. Their vile, destructive attitudes clearly show that they have no desire to change.

On rare occasions, Rogue dragons will batter through the walls from outside and allow the escape of some inhabitants. Most of the escapees will be caught in short time because they are so self-centered that they won't join the Rogue groups. At the first warning of an attack on the Lowerworld, the Warrior dragons spring into action. The bands of Rogue dragons (also known as the Annihilator's Offspring) are similar in thought to the beings imprisoned in the Underworld. They are an enemy that lurks everywhere in the Multiverse. The Warriors hunt them at all times, trying either to destroy or imprison them. The other, and more deadly, enemy is the Annihilator, a huge, sentient mass of evil that also roams the Multiverse. However, the Annihilator seeks to destroy everything it meets, even the Rogue dragons. You will learn more about the Annihilator in section 4, which is about the Dragon Warrior.

The Underworld, in spite of its constant evil, does have two sacred places. The Temple of Despair provides a refuge and counseling for those prisoners who have become enlightened enough to truly seek help. No one is ever turned away from the Temple of Despair. When one of the Underworld beings reaches the doorway to this Temple, she or he sees the two mammoth guarding pillars of stone. One is called Hammer and Anvil, the other Fire of Truth. The deep truth of their being is judged as that entity passes between the two stones and into the Temple. If there is no repentance, Hammer and Anvil sounds like a deep tolling bell, its warning tone echoing throughout the Underworld. The worthy creatures are welcomed by Fire of Truth, with its sounds like crystal bells. The worthy repentants are met by priestesses and taken to the Inner Chamber of the High Priestess. Here in the Inner Chamber, also a sacred spot, the candidate is spiritually cleansed, then escorted to the Hall of Justice.

Some candidates visit the Temple of Despair frequently in order to meditate in the cleansing calm before they are deemed sincere enough in mind and spirit

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to be taken to the judges. The priestesses make certain these beings understand that they will have a heavy karmic burden when they are reborn.

Gates to other fabulous places can be found on all three middle levels. From each of these new worlds there are gateways to yet more realms. These gates and realms continue in an infinite number. However, these particular gates are difficult to distinguish from the wandering, unsafe Gates. You will need one or more elder dragons to help you if you wish to use these unmarked Gates.

My description of the Otherworld is more of a road map than a travel guide. It is impossible to write about everything you can find on the levels of that realm. The joy of finding something new lies around the bend in any Otherworld path.

Ritual for Attracting Your Guardian Dragon

This is a serious ritual, for you are asking a guardian dragon to help you in your daily endeavors and make itself known to you in some way. Prepare your mind to be open and accepting of the new companion. Don't rush into performing this ritual or hurry through it, expecting a guardian to pop out of thin air. Dragons and magick work in their own ways and in their own time.

Even though the guardians, or any dragon, can become visible, they rarely make their presence known in this manner. "Visible to you" means visible to anyone else in the vicinity. It would be very upsetting to find yourself seeing perhaps only a dragon's head in a room with you while the rest of its body was outside the house. Not only that, but what would the neighbors or your family say, assuming they thought to say anything at all before they started shooting? All the arguments in the world about being ready to "see" a dragon doesn't mean you actually would be ready. So be patient after performing this ritual.

Ingredients: An altar cloth and two small bowls, one containing sea salt and the other containing water.

Preferable day: Thursday, a Jupiter day.

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Carefully spread your altar cloth on the floor or ground so that one of the sides faces north. Set the bowl of salt on the left side of the cloth in the west, and the bowl of water on the right in the east.

Kneel by your cloth, facing north. Hold your left hand over the salt and your right over the water at the same time. Say:

I call upon the positive powers of the universe to fill this salt and water.

Take the bowl of salt and stand. Moving clockwise around your altar cloth, sprinkle a few grains of salt at each directional point: west, north, east, and south. Set the salt back on the cloth. Take the bowl of water and repeat the actions you performed with the salt.

Drape your blue Apprentice ribbon across your shoulders while you kneel or sit cross-legged facing the northern direction. Say:

> *I am safe within the powerful ring of the Dragon Apprentice. As I sit within this sacred space, I invite and call for my guardian dragon to be here with me. I offer you loyal, warm friendship. May we walk the path together through the Five Inner Rings to the mystical center.*

Close your eyes and relax your body. Let your thoughts drift where they will, without any certain expectations. Within a short time, you will feel a light touch on your skin, a breath on your neck, or the very distinct feeling that you are no longer alone in your sacred space. For some reason dragons prefer to stand behind you. The older teachers rarely let you see them, while the tiny young ones can scarcely stay in one place for any length of time.

Don't expect the physical manifestation of your guardian dragon, for that rarely happens. Instead, the dragon will appear behind your closed eyelids. You may glimpse the entire body or just a friendly eye with eyelashes. Her or his thoughts will flash through your mind. You can distinguish the dragon's thoughts from your own by the wording, tone, or content. Although you may not get the dragon's name at this time, mentally send out thoughts of greeting and friendship. In return, your guardian dragon will surround you with a warm

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sense of friendship, like a hug. From this point onward, you and your guardian dragon will be inseparable.

Slowly open your eyes and place the palms of both hands on your altar cloth. Say:

> *I thank all dragons who were here with me during this ceremony. I especially thank my guardian, my friend and companion from this day forward. I release the excess power of this ritual into the Earth. May this ceremony harm no one, but bless the Multiverse with love and healing.*

This is an excellent time to sit for a few moments so you become familiar with your guardian's vibrations. The gender of your guardian has nothing to do with yours; a female guardian may choose to help a man simply because the two can work well together.

Pour out the water into a potted plant or onto the ground. It is full of healing energy with vibrations that exactly match those of the Earth. Put away the rest of your ritual items until they are needed again.

Don't be surprised if you feel the presence of very tiny dragons soon after your guardian arrives. The guardian often appears to baby-sit younger siblings. The very young ones are exuberant, full of mischief, and seem to be in constant motion. One of their favorite dragon games is to move an object you need to another place where you know you didn't put it.

The guardian dragons have usually matured beyond such "childish" games. However, if you ignore your guardian and don't try to make contact each day, your personal dragon may just join the tiny creatures in their mischief-making. Remember to keep the bond between you and your guardian dragon strong. This can easily be done by a few minutes of mental conversation each day.

Since dragons age very slowly compared to humans, I still have the presence of Tinsel and Rudy, mentioned in my first dragon book. They are still a delight. Nip and Tuck visit from time to time, but the beautiful Nesta now guards.

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Respect Names for Dragons

You should never call any dragon by its name unless you have been given direct permission to do so. To do otherwise is considered to be very rude, as is calling a dragon by just its clan name.

Female dragons hold any position a male dragon does. They are to be held in the same high regard, just as the Daughters of the Dragon are as much respected as the Sons of the Dragon. There is no visual way to distinguish a female dragon from a male. In other words, coloring, size, and manner of speaking are not gender distinctions, as they often are among humans or other Earth creatures.

The following is a list of respect names, which will keep you out of possible trouble when meeting and communicating with any dragon:

Chasah: Name for a leader of any clan. Meaning "leader" or "guide," this respect name is used whether the dragon is female or male. It is quite common for females to lead clans.

Mon-Tah: Your teacher/co-magician, unless given permission to use their name.

Moon Gutash: Star-Moon clan members, except their young.

Moosha: Name for all Gate guardians, who are members of the Savage Heart clan. The name means "warrior."

Mot-Tah: Other teachers and co-magicians.

Star-Gutash: Star-Born clan members, except their young, who you are not ever likely to see.

Tad Ekam: Name for any Chaos dragon.

Tah-Soor: Any older dragons you meet.

Tah-Soor-Izoris: The Elders and very important dragons you meet.

Tika: A general child-name for the small and guardian dragons of any clan.

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A native of the Pacific Northwest, author D. J. Conway has made the occult fields a lifelong quest and study. Her search for knowledge has covered every aspect of Paganism, Wicca, New Age, and Eastern philosophies, and their histories, customs, mythologies, and folklore. In 1998, she was voted Best Wiccan and New Age Author by *Silver Chalice*, a Pagan magazine. She was awarded the Prolific Pagans Award for Excellence and the EarthSongs Readers' Choice Award. D. J. also tied for second place in the 2006 COVR Visionary Awards. She lives a rather quiet life with her husband and fur people, with most of her time spent researching and writing.

She can be contacted through her website: www.djconway.com.

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